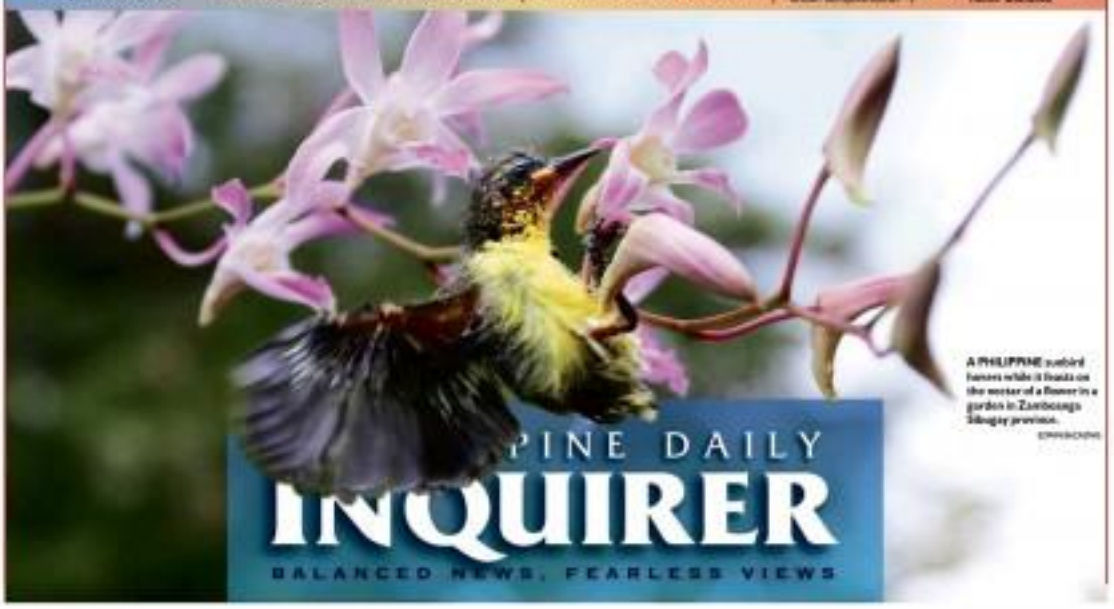
Friday, March 23, 2012 ★★ 12 sections / Vol. 27 / No. 106 P18 | Mobile Alerts: Text INQ DN BREAKING to 4407 | www.inquirer.net Twitter: @inquirerdotnet | Philippine Inquirer 25 April 1985 Twitter: @inquirer



A PHILIPPINE sunbird hovers while it feeds on the nectar of a flower in a garden in Zamboanga Sibugay province.

PINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Jojo, P-Noy, JPE get top marks

AQUINO: 70% APPROVAL RATE

BINAY: 84% APPROVAL RATE

ENRILE: 71% APPROVAL RATE

CORONA: 14% APPROVAL RATE

Enrile: But ratings can melt like ice cream

THE PROCEEDINGS of the impeachment court have apparently lifted the approval and trust ratings of its presiding officer, Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile, but drastically pulled down those of the one on trial, Chief Justice Renato Corona, results of a recent survey by Pulse Asia Inc. showed.

The impeachment trial of Corona appeared to have also adversely affected public approval of and trust in the Supreme Court.

The ratings of President Aquino and Vice President Jejomar Binay remained high, while that of Speaker Feliciano Belmonte Jr. went down, according to the survey results released yesterday.

Malacañang said Mr. Aquino's high trust and satisfaction ratings showed that the public was feeling the effects of the administration's programs against poverty and corruption.

"As we have always maintained, public office is a public trust. There is no greater proof that the public is feeling the efforts of our reforms than the President's sustained trust and satisfaction ratings," the Presidential spokesperson Edwin Lacierda said in a news briefing.

"We take these results as reinforcement to push for economic and institutional reforms to achieve inclusive, equitable growth," Lacierda added.

JOEL R. SAN JUAN / A19

THE ABOMINATION

In this April 5, 2009, image taken from KRT video, a rocket is launched from a military base in Musudan-ri, North Korea. North Korea announced on March 16 it plans to launch a long-range rocket mounted with a satellite next month, a surprise move that comes weeks after it agreed to nuclear concessions, including a moratorium on long-range missile tests. The government said it anticipated US help to track the North Korean rocket, part of which is expected to land off the Philippines.

AP/KRT TV

Gov't using smart bombs for first time vs Abu bandits

By Jim Gomez
Associated Press

CONCEALED by the night sky, the two aging Philippine Air Force planes unloaded a surprise high-tech weapon: US satellite-guided bombs that whizzed down with deadly precision toward a long-elusive terrorist and two other top radicals dozing with their men in Jolo Island's jungle.

The use of smart bombs, confirmed to The Associated Press (AP) by four senior Philippine security officials, marks a new chapter in the long-running battle against an al-Qaida-linked movement in Mindanao, viewed by the United States as a key front in the global effort to keep terrorists at bay.

Successive blasts shattered a hillside encampment of the Abu Sayyaf, which remains one of Southeast Asia's most violent groups despite a decade of battle losses.

The Vietnam War-era turboprops

GOV'T USING A11

Smart bombs no, smart pilots yes, says PAF general

By Julie Alipala
Inquirer Mindanao

ZAMBOANGA CITY—The Philippine Air Force (PAF) used "smart pilots"—not US satellite-guided "smart bombs"—when it hit an Abu Sayyaf lair in Patikul, Sulu province, on Feb. 2 and killed a bandit leader, Gumbahali Jumdail, and other terrorists, a PAF general insisted yesterday.

Maj. Gen. Jose Tony Villasoto, commander of the 3rd Air Division based in Zamboanga City, was reacting to an Associated Press report which said the PAF used satellite-guided bombs—a

SMART | A14

Day 34: How BGEI lot was sold to Manila

By TJ Burgonio, Cynthia D. Balana and Cathy Yamsuan

THE CAPTIAL gains tax and the value-added tax had not yet been paid 11 years after the sale of the Rosa-Guidote Enterprises Inc. (RGEI) property between Cristina Corona, wife of Chief Justice Renato Corona, and the Manila city government.

The title is also still in Cristina Corona's name.

This was pointed out by Sen. Franklin Drilon to former Manila Mayor Lito Atienza, a witness for the defense, on the 34th day of the impeachment trial of Corona.

The lead defense counsel, Serafin Cuevas, later pointed

DAY 34 | A14

Corona approval score dips to 14% in latest poll

By Kate Pedroso
Inquirer Research
and Marlon Ramos

THE MAJORITY of Filipinos not only disapprove of the performance of Chief Justice Renato Corona but also distrust him.

results of the latest survey by Pulse Asia Inc. show.

Corona's disapproval rating rose to 58 percent in March from 24 percent last November as his approval rating slipped to 14 percent from 38 percent.

CORONA | A20

P-Noy laughs off Grace date tweet

By Norman Bordadora

AFTER SITTING through hours of meetings in Malacañang, President Aquino laughed off a tweet that he said constant state and television host Grace Lee-won seen taking a stroll in a mall around the time he was discussing the affairs of state with his economic managers yesterday.

P-NOY | A4

NEWS	WORLD	BUSINESS	LIFESTYLE
Palace: Increased US presence not because of China / A2	**Standoff** with terror suspect in France enters 2nd day / A27	**Ayala** Land to invest P60B in Makati / B1	**Sen. Loren** shares her passion with public/ E1

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

TODAY: Cloudy with scattered rain showers and thunderstorms. Partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rain showers in the eastern section of Central and Southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. Light to moderate winds coming from the southwest. Slight to moderate seas.

Metro Manila	Mostly cloudy	Mostly cloudy
Baguio	Mostly cloudy	Mostly cloudy
Tuguegarao	Mostly cloudy	Mostly cloudy
Laoag	Mostly cloudy	Mostly cloudy
Legazpi	Mostly cloudy	Mostly cloudy
Puerto Princesa	Mostly cloudy	Mostly cloudy
Iloilo	Mostly cloudy	Mostly cloudy
Cebu	Mostly cloudy	Mostly cloudy
Tacloban	Mostly cloudy	Mostly cloudy
Zamboanga	Mostly cloudy	Mostly cloudy
Cagayan de Oro	Mostly cloudy	Mostly cloudy
Davao	Mostly cloudy	Mostly cloudy

6/49

Last	27 30
2nd	12 24
3rd	28 35

SUERTRES

Last	7 7 6
2nd	4 9 0
3rd	7 7 2

SIX DIGIT (Tuesday, Friday)

1 0 6 8 5 9

6/42 LUZ-VIS-MIN

1 3 14 24 27 28

P6,339,814.20

SUPER LOTTO 6/49

9 13 18 22 33 44

P73,208,282.40

LOTTO: 5992 Tues 6M LOTTO, result to 6042. PCSO photo

House passes whistle-blower bill

THE HOUSE of Representatives has passed on third and final reading a bill that would ensure that those who dare to blow the lid off scandalous government wouldn't be left twisting in the wind.

Before adjourning for its monthlong break, the House approved the Whistle-blower Protection, Security and Benefits Act which seeks to provide physical security and monetary rewards to those who expose graft and corruption in government.

The House also passed other measures, such as a bill criminalizing enforced or involuntary disappearances, one providing compensation for victims of human rights violations during martial law, and a bill providing more benefits to ex-servicemen. Priority measures of the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council (Ledac) were approved as well.

House Minority party-list Rep. Teddy Casiño, principal author of the whistle-blower bill, said he hoped the impending passage of the measure would encourage more court employees to speak out against anomalies in the judiciary, in apparent reference to the impeachment of Chief Justice Renato Corona in which a majority of the congressmen backed.

"When passed into law, the Whistle-blowers Act will allow Supreme Court employees and even justices, along with other upright individuals, to expose corruption and wrongdoing in their offices," Casiño said in a statement.

Julie D. Salcedo/trainee

Palace: Increased US presence not because of China

By Norman Bordadora and DJ Yap

MALACAÑANG yesterday denied the disputes with other countries over territories in the West Philippine Sea (South China Sea) were the reason for the increased US presence in the Philippines that was announced by President Aquino on Wednesday.

Secretary Edwin Lacierda, Mr. Aquino spokesperson, nevertheless acknowledged that the rise in the numbers of US troops and vessels visiting the country would contribute to the stability of the region, as well as improve the Philippine military's capability to protect the country.

Military 'updates'

Lacierda said the beefed-up US presence was not related to the territorial disputes with China and other potentially rich islands in the West Philippine Sea.

"No, it's in line with the belief of the President [that] we have to update our military training and capability," he said during the daily briefing/media news briefing.

"In practicum, our military hardware are not quite up to date with [that of] our neighbors. So it's imperative for us to update our military hardware and that's for purposes of the protection of our country as well. But this is primarily to improve our military training and capability," he said.

As for whether an increased US presence would exacerbate tensions in the West Philippine Sea, Lacierda said: "It will certainly.

He reiterated, however, that the primary reason for expanding the joint military exercises with the United States was the reported improvement in the capability of the Philippine military.

"What we can say for certain is that the acquisition of military hardware and the training of our Philippine troops would certainly improve our capability to protect our borders and to protect ourselves from any threat from outside," he said.

"So that is our position. That's the reason we're getting training, not only from them [US], by the way," he added.

Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin on Thursday described plans to hold more joint military training exercises with the United States as an "expanded 98A (Visiting Forces Agreement), but definitely with no bases" involved.

He said the "high value" and "high impact" exercises would benefit the armed forces of both the Philippines and the US—which would be unveiling over more troops—although he could not say how many servicemen would be participating on both sides.

"I cannot be definite on the numbers but definitely there will be more participation of forces from both the US and the Philippines," General Gazmin reported during the 110th anniversary celebration of the Philippine Army at Fort Bonifacio.

New exercises

He said the exercises would be different from those conducted in Mindanao, which American forces traditionally visit as part of the annual Balikatan joint training exercises.

"We are looking at exercises that will be of value to both countries, those high impact exercises that can help us in a lot of areas," said Gazmin.

He cited among these exercises as ones to help the Philippine Navy improve its emergency and disaster response skills.

President Aquino earlier said the Philippines was looking to the United States for help in building up its defense capability in the midst of maritime tensions with China in the West Philippine Sea and other security concerns.

Kuwaiti sheikh here today for state visit

By Norman Bordadora

THE PHILIPPINES and Kuwait will sign several agreements during Kuwaiti Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmed's five-day state visit that starts this afternoon.

Malacañang said Sheikh Sabah is scheduled to arrive at the Palace this afternoon for a courtesy call on and bilateral meeting with President Aquino.

The agreements to be signed by the two countries include a memorandum of understanding on agricultural and fisheries cooperation, an agreement on the waiver of visa requirements for holders of diplomatic, special and official passports, an executive program for the cultural agreement for 2012 to 2014, a memorandum of understanding on cooperation in the recruitment and employment of Filipino household service workers, and a memorandum of understanding on labor cooperation.

Among the signatories for the Philippine side are Foreign Affairs Secretary Albert del Rosario, Agriculture Secretary Proceso Alcala, Labor Secretary Rosalinda Baldoz, and National Commission on Culture and the Arts Chair Felipe de Leon.

GMA waives presence in trial

By Nathaniel B. Midicat
and Leila B. Salaverria

HAMBOK in the trial of the electoral sabotage case against former president Gloria Macapagal Arroyo will go on with or without her in court.

Arroyo, through her lawyers, yesterday filed with Pasay City Regional Trial Court Branch 112 a waiver of appearance, stating that she is "waiving her right to appear and be present at the pretrial and trial stages" of the case.

Arroyo also stated that every time her name is mentioned in the course of the trial, she agrees that the name pertains to her and that she will not dispute her identity with that name.

She told the court that she will appear before it whenever her presence is required, but, if she decides to show up, despite notice and without proper justification, the trial may proceed in her absence.

She also promised that she will be present when a final judgment has been rendered in the case, and that she will not leave the country without the court's permission.

Fingerprinting in hospital

Also yesterday, the Sandiganbayan Fourth Division unanimously allowed Arroyo to undergo fingerprinting and other procedures related to her hospitalization in her graft cases at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center (VMMC) instead of at the court.

The graft cases surround then Arroyo's approval of the canceled $329 million National Broadband Network deal with China's ZTE Corp., allegedly overpriced and disadvantageous to the government. The Fourth Division ordered Arroyo and her ex-aide arrested on March 15.

The court said Arroyo, through her lawyers or representative, must first post P90,000 bail for her three cases, after which it would issue the order for arrest permanent to proceed to the VMMC to process all the legal requirements related to her posting bail.

The requirements include fingerprinting, filling out a personal information sheet, and signing the bail undertaking. Mugshots are not required since under Sandiganbayan procedures, Arroyo can just submit her own pictures.

Bail processing

Arroyo had asked the court to allow her to undergo bail processing at the VMMC, where she is detained on orders of the Pasay court handling her electoral-sabotage case. She said in her petition that going to the Sandiganbayan would entail additional security and expenses for the government.

The prosecution did not oppose Arroyo's petition for humanitarian consideration.

Arroyo is charged with graft and violating the code of conduct and ethical standards for public officials and employees.

Also accused in one of the graft cases were her husband Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo, former elections chief Benjamin Abalos, and former transportation and communication secretary Leandro Mendoza. Mike Arroyo and Mendoza posted bail earlier.

Critics gang up on Comelec chief

By Christine V. Bagaoisan

CRITICS, including losing candidates in the 2010 polls, yesterday ganged up on Chairman Sixto Brillantes of the Commission on Elections (Comelec) because of his decision to renew previous contract-related woes (PCOS) machines in next year's elections.

But Brillantes found an ally in Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile, who challenged critics to identify electoral officials previously occupying government posts who benefited from alleged glitches in the automated voting.

"Of course, any technician can find something to criticize. But I'm talking about the result of the last elections. If you can prove to us that there are people serving now, exercising power, who were the product of cheating during the last election, then maybe we are open [to changing the system]," Enrile told complainants at the hearing of the committee on electoral reforms.

Among the losing candidates who showed up in the hearing were ex-Mayor Lito Atienza of Manila and former House Representatives Glen Chong of Bilinan and Thomas Dumpit Jr. of La Union.

"If we say there's cheating with PCOS, are we also saying that the victory of President Aquino involved cheating? I think that's irresponsible. Even in the case of [Vice President Jejomar] Binay there was no cheating," Enrile said to Filipinos, noting that he had presided over the canvassing of votes of president and vice president in the 2010 elections.

Sen. Aquilino Pimentel III, the committee chair, noted that most of the resource persons in attendance "are not satisfied" with the PCOS machines. He asked Brillantes if the Comelec had been approached by any group or individual endorsing the machines.

"There's none. I don't even know [manufacturer]," said Brillantes, referring to the private company that supplies the electronic voting machines that were used in the 2010 polls.

The Comelec earlier decided to exercise its option to purchase more than 80,000 PCOS machines to be used in the 2013 elections, a move that did not sit well with a number of groups.

CEBU DOCTORS' UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

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The Wavelight Refractive Station
(No Blade LASIK)
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As UNIQUE as you are, you deserve that range of customization options recognized only by the LenSx Laser and our Alcon Refractive Station Because it's your welfare we are most concerned about. Drop by our Centre and we'll show you the difference.

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P-Noy laughs off Grace date tweet

GRACE LEE

The President, criticized and even punished for his alleged inaction on the cycle of oil price increases, said—ironically—that those who spread the rumor had nothing better to do.

Maybe to reduce the ire rising from (P3.4 billion) fuel hikes, Aquino, seamlessly posted a tweet, I supposedly spent the whole day in Greenhills with a date.' Mr. Aquino told Palace employees on the occasion of the 113th anniversary of the Office of the President.

Malacañang officials said the President spent the day attending meetings with the National Economic and Development Authority board and with Foreign Secretary Albert del Rosario. Mr. Aquino himself said over dinner, one was on extending Line 1 of the Light Rail Transit from Manila all the way to Bacoor town in Cavite.

Over the past days, the President has been televising pictures showing the President at work in the wake of "Noynoying" protests being staged by militants. The protests have already drawn the attention of even the foreign media, including the online Wikipedia.

"Noynoying (pronounced noy-noy-YING) is a protest gimmick in the form of neologism which carries of President Benigno Aquino III have used to call attention to what they claim is the "do-nothing" work ethic and inaction of Aquino over many grievous, important and rising national problems," the Wikipedia entry read.

"The terms in reference to Aquino's nickname, Noynoy . . . [It] also taps into old Philippine folk tales about Juan Tamad, who likes to get by doing the least amount of work to get by," Wikipedia said.

It said: "Since 16 Oct documented usages in October 2011, the term was used as a form of protest against Aquino, wherein protesters performed 'Noynoying' poses such as sitting idly while resting their hands on one hand and doing nothing."

"The act had since gone viral on the Internet, while Malacañang was confident it will not catch on with the public," it said.

Nothing better to do

Reacting to the tweet posted under the irreverent name PlastikMovement, the President said: "May po ibinigay na mahigpit na gawain (There are really those who have nothing better to do). We have to find jobs for these people because they lament (more about anything). But let's just laugh that off."

Such rumors, Mr. Aquino acknowledged, were part of "our society."

"And dahil wala na tayo (after ordained and apologized for the tweet) "misery ito (the confusion) everyone. In local parlance, nakiyamot sila, and I was foolish to tweet accurate lead (accuracy)," it said.

"And to those who have posted (unreasonable) tactics against me, I sincerely understand. Lord knows I've given you a lot of material to work with," it added.

Man defender

While lauding the youth's militancy for being active again on politics through their "Noynoying" antics, a respected activist man yesterday defended Mr. Aquino from accusations that he was a "do nothing" president.

Sr. Mary John Mananzan, chair of the Association of Major Religious Superiors in the Philippines (AMRSP), said she appreciated the youth's creativity in coming up with new forms of protests but insisted that the President was doing his job.

"For me, they have the right to do that. The young people have the right to express whatever their sentiments are. Well, they are using new forms of protest to call the attention of the President to what they consider as issues that are being addressed," Mananzan said on the sidelines of the World Council of Churches gathering at Traders Hotel in Manila.

"Of course, I also understand that P-Noy will be a little bit hurt by it because it's also not true that he's doing nothing. For me, his work management is just different," she said.

"It's better to have this than have someone who's working all the time but is not doing it for good, but I find this case (Hilario, ex-director) unfortunate just through the volume of work. For me, we should be 'political,'" she added.

Corona trial

Mananzan said the young activists should acknowledge in part Noynoy Mr. Aquino's zeal and persistence in going after graft and corruption and impeached Chief Justice Renato Corona.

"For me, his pursuit against corruption is something that we should acknowledge. Of all our presidents, it's only now that we see something like this aimed more at against (MM former President and now Pampanga Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo)," she said.

"I welcome P-Noy's persistence in going after Corona (but that does not mean that the other issues would remain unaddressed," she added.

"For me, impeaching Corona is a big thing that's not just one issue among others. This is a big issue. And if you really succeed in impeaching Corona, then you'll have this message that crime does not pay."

Working with militants

Malacañang said it was fine with the party-list group Bayan Muna being part of the Administration coalition in Congress even with the role of allied militant groups in Noynoying protests.

"Obviously, there are certain advocacies that we are in agreement with and some don't agree with us, for instance, the agitated wage hike. That's something that they are pushing for," the President's spokesperson, Edwin Lacierda, said in yesterday's news briefing.

"We have no problem working with the Commission. We can't of the impeachment team. So we will have issues that we will have to disagree and issues that we can agree on," Lacierda said. He was referring to the Bayan Muna congressman who is serving as a prosecutor in the impeachment trial.

He said the administration would not be wary of Bayan Muna following the rank of protests.

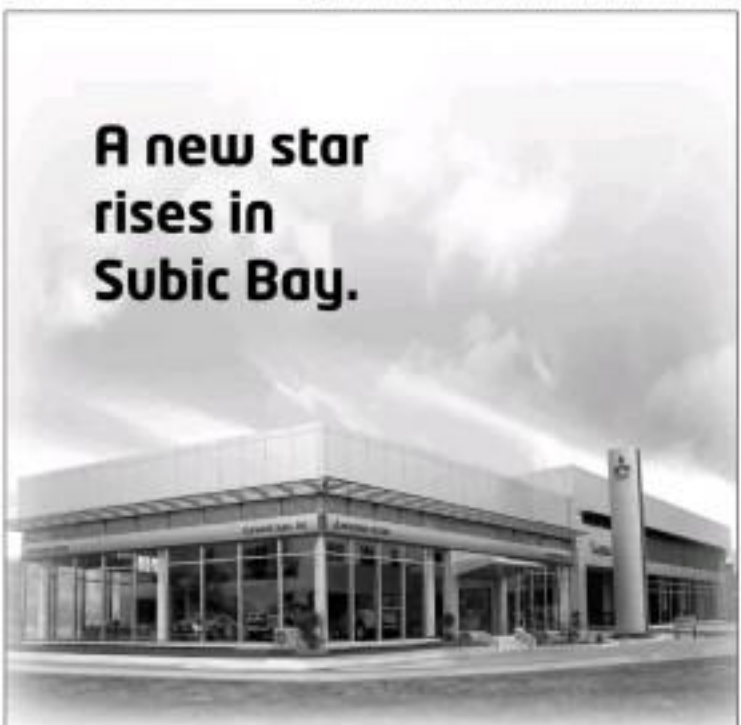
"I mean, it's all part of the legislative mill so they debate whatever they would like to advocate. It's subject to the legislative process. And, as you know, in the legislative process it's the majority that gives the action," he said.

'Passing fancy'

Noynoying is just "a passing fancy," Lacierda said.

"The vast majority knows what this administration is doing," Lacierda said in apparent reference to the most recent survey by Pulse Asia.

He said the economic indicators could prove the President's deft and core wrong. (BOTH a report from Philip C. Tubeza)



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Drive Dynamic

Mangrove cutting was legal, Ombudsman finds

By Leila B. Salaverria

OMBUDSMAN prosecutors have sought to withdraw the criminal case they filed in the Sandiganbayan against former National Power Corp. (Napocor) president Cyril del Callar. Prosecutors preparing amended Resolution/Consolidation said special efforts in connection with the cutting of mangroves in Cavite and Puerto Princesa City in 2006.

In a manifestation filed yesterday, the Office of the Special Prosecutor (OSP) said the inadequate cause that Ombudsman Conchita Carpio Morales had approved its recommendation to dismiss the case on the ground the two-year-old case with the proper periods and pursuant to Napocor's job in underTake the Palauan Bataan Transmission Line Project.

The Ombudsman's decision came after Del Callar and Conchita filed a motion for reconsideration challenging their indictment.

Aside from the Napocor officials, who cleared were Harold Lazarus Francisco Madera and Ramel Bernar of S.L. Development Construction Corp., which Napocor had hired to clear 12,000 square meters of mangroves.

They were earlier charged with violating the Palauan Code—which penalizes the cutting of mangroves—for the cutting of 176 trees to make way for the installation of Napocor transmission lines and towers.

The OSP found that the clearing activities undertaken in connection with the transmission line project were carried by two demonstrations of agencies, DENR with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and were supported by permits.

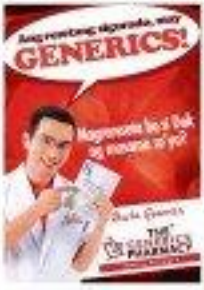
The first MOA gave Napocor an thority to take or cut down any regulations and laws contrary or adverse to the transmission line right of way to ensure the lines would be submerged.

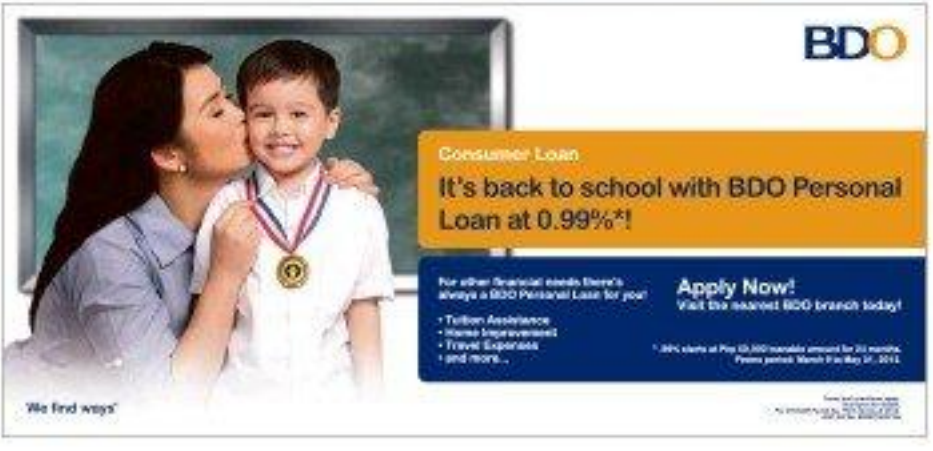
The second MOA provided guidelines on forestry activities within the Napocor cutting area, and tasked the DENR to inspect the Cables to be felled, among other duties.

Among the permits the Napocor received that covered several areas of Bataan were a special land use permit; road right of way covering 119 hectares of public forest land; a special timber-cutting permit to cut and gather 9,956 trees along the road right of way of the transmission line project, and a special cutting permit issued by the Department of Sustainable Development.

The OSP said the explanation of Napocor officials that the clearing activities were conducted under the supervision of DENR personnel was never refuted by the complainant. The activities were also supported by a DENR certification.

"There was also no evidence to show that the mangroves were converted to any other purpose, which is what is prohibited by law, it said. There was also no evidence to show the forest products were converted for the unauthorized use or benefit.





No free ride for Corona on SALNs of gov't execs

Radiofrequency ablation- a miraculous surgery that uses a A 1mm needle to "burn" the tumor

What can be more unusual than the minimal invasive treatment akin to "needlestick" tumor called surgery? This minimally invasive surgery is called the radiofrequency ablation. The method utilizes a needle which emits rays calculated to pierce through the skin directly into the kidney and burn the tumor. The process takes only about 10 minutes and what is surprising is that the skin of the patient is left only with a tiny needlepoint of less than 1mm. This is even less than the size of the needlepoint after a blood donation which cannot be seen by the naked eye.

The method obliterated the tumor of a 66 year old woman from Japan, Ms. Kuni Ki Zi-Zi (Ki) who was diagnosed with kidney tumor in the local hospital. With the aid of Ultrasound and CT scan, the doctors detected her tumor to the right kidney with a diameter of about 3mm. A friend introduced her to Guangzhou Modern Cancer Hospital for treatment. Mr. Wang Bing Hua, the director of the Interventions department of the said hospital recommended the use of radiofrequency ablation technique. This is a complete non-invasive treatment for kidney cancer during the past months the tumor is cut out or the entire kidney is removed. It was Director Wang who personally performed the surgery. He used a needle of about 20cm in length and 1.47mm in thickness. It was not just an ordinary needle, it was meant to release radiofrequency waves similar to a microwave oven. It is like heating the tumor over 100°C in order to "burn" the tumor to death. Small tumors are normally "burned" up to 12 minutes but if the tumor is larger, the "burning" process can be repeated 2-4 times and after the

[illegible] of 10 minutes the operation ends.

For those who are doubtful and unconvinced, Director Wang explains that the tumor cells are sensitive to heat; hence they can be "burned to death" with just 60°C. Once buried, the scar within the body would gradually assimilate and would not need chemotherapy. This is so because burning, is a complete clean up compared to surgical resection. What is more, it takes only a day after the surgery for the patient to be able to get out of bed, walk around, eat, drink, and sleep normally.

With surgery now even the cancers internally, radiofrequency ablation is used on the tumors externally. The manner of removal differs but the results are the same. For tumors ranging from 3-5cm, radiofrequency ablation or surgical resection yield a five-year survival rate. Be that as it may, it should be noted that radiofrequency ablation is a treatment applied externally, which means, it is only applicable on tumors growing on the outer organs, such as liver cancer, lung cancer, kidney cancer, soft tissue tumors, and other tumors. However when it comes to cavity organs, such as gastric cancer of digestive tract and colorectal cancer, the radiofrequency ablation technique is quite helpless.

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By TJ Burgonio

CHIEF Justice Renato Corona can't have a free ride on the job done by the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ), and should himself secure the statements of assets, liabilities and net worth (SALN) of government officials.

With this argument, Midas Marquilos said less other PCIJ staff members opposed the request of the defense to summon them as present to the Senate impeachment court the SALNs of 1,500 officials that had been the subject of their special report, among other things.

In an opposition filed with the impeachment court, Marquilos said Reed Anne Ilagan and Ed Lingao asserted that the request of the defense for a subpoena was not only "unnecessarily" but also "oppressive."

Private investigators

The request, they said, attempts to turn the PCIJ staff "into private investigators, since the PCIJ as the official custodian of SALNs, and requires them to bring in a large volume of materials, including some that are not authenticated, and hence irrelevant."

The PCIJ obtained the SALNs from the official custodians, and paid for them, and it might be appropriate for Corona to make a similar request with the custodians "as its what the PCIJ did," they said.

"Go to the official custodians, make a request, pay the appropriate fees, and after securing the SALNs, do research and analysis," they said.

"The respondents, or any other party for that matter, should not be allowed to free ride on the efforts, work and journalistic portfolio of the PCIJ and in so doing, make it that party's private investigator, especially when such can be avoided through a little foresight and some hard work," they added.

In a special report published earlier this month, the PCIJ reviewed the SALNs of about 1,500 senior election and appointive officials since 1998, and found that those were "recently deficient in form and substance."

The defense panel on Monday filed a motion to subpoena the PCIJ staff to bring to the impeachment court and testify on the SALNs. The prosecution opposed the motion, arguing that the documents were immaterial and irrelevant to the trial. Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile said he would not rule.

Besides Marquilos, Ilagan and Lingao pointed out that just because some officials did not fully declare their assets based either on their fair market value, assessed value, or acquisition cost doesn't make the request right.

They said the request was aimed at disproving any "willful omission of the entries" in Corona's SALN, and showing good faith "in filling up the same."

'Everybody does it'

In legal parlance, this is called the "Everybody Does It" defense, they said, citing the case United States vs Oliveros in which the Court of Appeals affirmed the conviction of the respondent over her use of bribes to affect her subordinates' duties.

"In the instant case, as in Oliveros, only respondent's actions and state of mind are material to his guilt," they said. "The fact that there may have been others who benefited from their improper conduct would do nothing to excuse the respondent. Thus any evidence to establish such defense would be irrelevant and therefore inadmissible."

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Retired GMA general denies recruiting soldiers for coup

By DJ Yap

DAU OIC the retired generals closely identified with the Arroyo administration on Thursday dispelled rumors he was behind the recruitment of active military personnel for a coup to be launched against the Aquino administration.

"I am not recruiting or asking soldiers to recruit for me," said former Armed Forces of the Philippines chief Hermogenes Esperon in an interview at Fort Bonifacio on the sidelines of the 111th anniversary celebration of the Philippine Army which he once headed as commanding general.

"I don't know about reports linking me [to coup plots] but this much I can say: First of all, let's take a look at whoever is saying that. Because I learn noised that whoever are saying a coup will happen are those who were involved in coups in the past," Esperon said.

He said that, on the contrary, he was one of those in the military organization "who had been fighting attempts to destabilize the government since 1987."

"I even became the commander of the counterintelligence unit of the Army in 1990 and 1991 and that was the force that was going after the coup plotters," Esperon said.

"When I became chief of staff, or even as army commander, I truly disliked any action taken outside of the chain of command and those who needed an 'their' government when such a mechanism existed," he said.

Esperon said he had no reason to want to topple the Aquino administration.

"Why would I do that? Let us learn from the lessons of the past. Those who were removed in the active service by coup plotters were those whose careers were ruined," he said.

"What I can only say is for us not destroy the armed forces by way of brainwashing the retirees. It's like they're saying the armed forces is evil because it breeds coup plotters. Let us aim for an armed forces that is strong and credible," he said.

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Gov't lifts OFW deployment ban in Libya, Nigeria, S. Sudan

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE GOVERNMENT has lifted the ban on the deployment of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) on Nigeria, Libya and South Sudan.

Labor Secretary Rosalinda Baldoz said yesterday that the governing board of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) issued three separate resolutions lifting the ban on deployment to the three African countries.

Baldoz cited POEA records that showed there are 2,032 Filipino migrant workers in Libya; 1,614 in Nigeria, and 1,911 in Sudan.

Baldoz said the POEA lifted the ban for Nigeria after the Department of Foreign Affairs earlier this month gave the green light due to the improved security situation in that country.

The ban on deployment of migrants to Nigeria was imposed on Jan. 22, 2007 due to the rise of kidnappings and unrest in that country.

The ban was partially lifted in March 2007, allowing migrants vacationing in the Philippines to go back to their jobs. But the ban was reimposed in January 2008 and was expanded to cover Filipino seafarers.

Baldoz said the ban for Libya was lifted after the Office of the President approved the recommendation of the Department of Foreign Affairs to lower the crisis alert level at that northern African country.

Manila barred migrants from going to Libya in February 2011 after the civil war that eventually toppled the regime of Moammar Gadhafi broke out.

The POEA partially lifted the ban in December and allowed only migrant workers with existing contracts in the oil and medical services sectors to Libya.

"The gradual processing is no longer to allow as the governing board now allows the resumption of the processing and deployment of Filipino workers to Libya," Baldoz said.

The POEA board also lifted the ban on deployment to South Sudan, as the political and security situation in that country had improved.

The POEA imposed a total ban two months ago due to worsening political and security situation there.

Memphis names PH 'honored country'

By Jerry E. Esplanada

GOOD news: The Philippines has been named the "honored country" by Memphis—the largest city in the US-southeastern state of Tennessee—in its 2012 Memphis in May International Festival (MIMF), the US Embassy in Manila announced yesterday.

In a report posted on its website, the embassy quoted Philippine Ambassador to Washington Jose Cuisia Jr. as having said "The Philippine government and the Filipino people are truly humbled by the privilege bestowed upon the Philippines as the honored country for the 2013 MIMF, demonstrating the best of Philippine culture, service, performances, business practices and Filipino hospitality."

"This festival will clearly demonstrate that 'It's more fun in the Philippines,'" Cuisia said, quoting the new Philippine slogan for promoting tourism.

Aside from building international ties and understanding, the MIMF site "fosters civic pride and promotes awareness of Memphis heritage," the US Embassy said.

This week, at least 30 community and business leaders from Memphis are visiting the Philippines to "explore areas for potential trade and investment," the embassy said.

"The delegation will be joined by their families and friends and other Memphis cultural enthusiasts," the embassy said.

In a statement, Holt said he was "thrilled to be leading this trip...I look forward to furthering our relationships with individuals and businesses in the Philippines."

Known as the "River City," Memphis was founded in 1819. It is the 26th largest city in the United States.

RH bill foes face the wrath of student groups

By Julie M. Aurelio

POLITICIANS won't be the only ones tweeting votes in next year's elections.

The alliance of youth leaders in universities nationwide yesterday warned that it will heavily campaign against legislators opposing the controversial reproductive health bill.

"We will make sure they will lose in 2013 as we are ready to launch the full force of the youth against anti-RH legislators," said JC Tejano, finance Council Alliance (KAP) national spokesperson, noting that as votes against the proposed measure is a vote against the youth.

In a press conference yesterday, the KAP through its leaders in different universities, urged congress now to pass the RH bill, saying the measure is vital to the youth's future.

Tejano said they have chapters in universities in the provinces to campaign against prospective candidates who are vocal in their opposition to the RH bill.

"We will be there... In Manila, Cebu, Leyte," he said, naming a few districts where prominent leaders are against the measure.

Maria Ofelia Castrejon chairperson of the University of the Philippines student council, said lawmakers "shouldn't belittle the youth's vote. They should listen to what the youth are actually saying."

Hero Crampo, chairperson of the University of the East student council, noted that 80 percent of the 2.6 million new voters in the 2010 polls came from the youth sector.

Assistant Editor Tony Hernando

Across the NATION

Kidnapping delays Iligan graduation

ILIGAN CITY—Graduation rites for at least 20 pupils of an elementary school in a village here would be postponed following the kidnapping of two of the children's teachers, a city official said.

The city school board decided to postpone graduation ceremonies for pupils of the Lumbacato Bayog Hills Elementary School in Barangay Bagong here after teachers Kim Sanchez, 24, and Nino Jomoc-ging, 25, were reported by gunmen on Monday and taken captive.

The kidnappers are demanding a P4-million ransom, according to city officials.

The two teachers had been kidnapped on the same day as the abduction of Rosalie Klaus, 54, a government midwife in Sulu. Klaus had been released in Pikit on Friday about 40 hours after she was seized. The two Iligan teachers, however, are still in captivity.

Councilor Atul Augbay, head of the city council's committee on education and member of the school board, said the school release the two hidang-tidlong would could even dear dawn become teachers are now about for their safety.

Plan scrapped

The kidnapping of Sanchez and Sumayang also prompted the school board to scrap a plan to build a high school in Barangay Bagong.

Augbay said the graduation ceremony for the elementary school was originally set on March 30 but would have to be moved to another but yet unspecified date.

Mayor Lawrence Cruz said the city government would not pay any ransom to the kidnappers. He instead appealed to the kidnappers to release the teachers for humanitarian reasons.

Police, however, said operations are ongoing to rescue the teachers.

Supt. Cole Angeles, city police chief, said police are scouring the towns of Pantao Ragat and Tagoloan II to locate the hideout where the teachers were believed to have been brought.

The rescue, said Segnera, were those where the suspected leader of the kidnappers, a certain Dimangcay Abdusa Dilan, a former Moro rebel who recently left the army de guerre Commander Ayoubah, is believed to operate.

Criminal ruled

Also, according to Segnera, had been involved in logging and turned to other criminal activities like kidnapping after a road ban was declared in the city and other areas in reaction to the massive destruction and deaths that Sigua and Sagwan de Oro City suffered on Dec. 17 at the height of Tropical Storm "Sendong."

Dilan, according to Councilor Augbay "is financially problematic."

Michelle Ekona was released on Wednesday by her captors to the head of Barangay Maligay to Pikit, Sulu, according to Col. Jose Cesadiar, deputy naval commander for Western Mindanao.

In Pikit Sanchez, health coordinator of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao and Ekona's boss, said the local crisis committee was involved in negotiations to free Ekona.

The identities of the gunmen who seized Ekona, however, were not made known. Sanchez said it was not clear, too, why Ekona was abducted.

"Glad is good," said Sanchez in a phone interview shortly after he swallowed reports that Ekona has been freed.

Ekona was on her way home on Monday when she landed in Barangay Liang in Pikit. Rachel Ekona, Thin Piel and Ad'le Alipato, Inquirer Mindanao

FISHING
A man catches fish using a portable stream net across river below the Ambuklao Dam in Bokod, Benguet. The river is one of the few in the country considered clean enough for fish to thrive in.
KIMBERLEE JOY CHUA/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

30 West Visayas schools to hike tuition

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—At least 30 schools in Western Visayas will increase their tuition and other fees next school year, according to the Commission on Higher Education (CHED).

The schools that have submitted their letter of intent to the CHED to record plans to raise rates include 12 in Negros Occidental, 11 in Iloilo, three in Aklan, two in Guimaras and one each in Capiz and Antique.

In Negros Occidental, the schools include the Bindunganc Catholic College, Colegio de San Agustin-Bacolod, Colegio de Santa Rita, Bobinkolehan Catholic College, La Consolacion College Mount Carmel College, Southland College, Silverside College, University of Negros Occidental-Recoletos, University of St. La Salle, VMA Global College and Notre Negros University.

In Iloilo, the schools are Central Philippine University, Iloilo State College of Fisheries (ISCF)-Main, ISCF-Barotac Nuevo, ISCF-Dingle, ISCF-Dumangas, ISCF-San Enrique, Saint Therese College (STC) STC-Tigbauan, STC-MTC-Main, STC-MTC-Lapuz, St. Paul University Iloilo and University of Iloilo.

The other schools that plan to increase their rates are Aklan College, Kalibo Colleges of Technology and Aklan Polytechnic (Aklan), Filamer Christian College (Capiz), Guimaras State College (GSC)-Main and GSC-Mosqueda (Guimaras).

Alan Leno, CHED coordinator for tuition and other school fees, said the schools were required to submit by April 1 specific rates that they planned to implement next school year.

Last year, 221 schools in Western Visayas increased their tuition and other school fees averaging 6.4 percent and ranging from 4 to 25 percent.

Student groups and councils in Bacolod, Dumaguete, Iloilo and Tacloban have earlier opposed the tuition increase.

The student groups said they would gather data in an openly conducted survey to affirm their contentions and other irregularities in the implementation of the increase.

They are also calling for a moratorium on school fee increase.

"The unbearable increase of oil prices and basic commodities make it more imperative to urge the increase in the cost of education to enable parents to continue sending their children to school," said Kudo Sikhol Morgan, regional coordinator of the Kabataan Partylist.

The CHED, while exercising regulatory powers over institutions of higher education, does not exercise powers to stop tuition increases.

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THE EARTH Chapel inside the campus of UNO-R, named to be the first fully solar-powered chapel in the country.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

In Bacolod campus, chapel beams as symbol of care for environment

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—What does it take to build an environmentally friendly chapel? Make panels, LED lights, used wine bottles and a lot of heart.

Volunteers built a chapel that not only blends with its environment but has also become a model for environment friendly buildings in the country.

The chapel at the Greenheart Buildings section of the University of Negros Occidental-Recoletos (UNO-R) campus was built with the help of those artists from Negros Occidental.

According to Rev. Jaanrel "Jigger" Jakosalem, the chapel is the first fully solar-powered religious structure in the country.

"It is envisioned to have a sound spiritual and environmental atmosphere," said Jakosalem, director of Greenheart.

The chapel was opened on Sunday to coincide with the feast of St. Joseph, patron of the universal church.

Jakosalem is one of three artists who offered their services for free to build what is now known here as the Earth Chapel. The two other are Manuel Alquiza, a visual artist who builds mud houses, and Nandoux Alvarado, a social realist.

Alquiza designed the chapel, while Jakosalem did the interiors and conceptualized the incorporation of renewable energy into the structure. Alvarado designed the candle for the chapel, from his pen-and-ink version of "Tree of Abundance" that was transformed into a colorful mosaic at chapel centerpiece.

The chapel is made of indigenous materials, with its structure made of mud, bamboo, rice straw and stalk, and cogon grass.

Wine bottles, which served as material for stained glass windows, were installed in the structure, Jakosalem said. LED lights provide illumination inside, he said.

Recycled materials, such as discarded tiles and wood slabs, were also used.

HOMETOWN Soughthee

DepEd targets 100% coverage of kinder kids

LUISTRO

BALIWAG CITY—If there is a five-year-old child in your neighborhood who has not yet attended school, report it to the Department of Education (DepEd).

This is because DepEd is opening kindergarten classes this summer, said Education Secretary Armin Luistro, who was here on Wednesday for a two-day outreach on the K+12 (Kindergarten Gr. 12) basic education program, which will be implemented in June.

"I hope you can give me a list of those who were not able to attend kindergarten last school year so that they won't be too traumatized when they enter Grade 1," Luistro told some 1,500 teachers and educational officials from the Bocos, Gapuwan Valley Consortium and Cordillera.

Last year, with the implementation of the universal kindergarten program in public schools, Luistro said some 1.7 million children enrolled in public schools and another 400,000 were admitted in private schools.

"But our participation rate for five-year-old children is around 92 percent. We are looking for the missing 8 percent," Luistro said.

In January, President Aquino signed Republic Act No. 10157, or the Kindergarten Act that institutionalizes kindergarten as a crucial part of basic education. It was partially implemented last school year.

In June, kindergarten education will be a prerequisite for admission to Grade 1 as part of the K to 12 basic education cycle.

Luistro said on the K to 12, students begin preschool or kindergarten at the age of five and finish the senior program at the age of 18.

"We need your help so that all children will be able to attend kinder. And all those who finished kinder will enter Grade 1," he said.

"This is our division for our K to 12. That no child will be left behind deeper can shcmcourage," he said.

He said those entering Grade 1 next school year will be the first batch to undergo the full K to 12 basic education program. —Gabriel Sardinas, Inquirer Northern Luzon

Customs denies Cebu smuggling

CEBU CITY—The Bureau of Customs in Cebu on Tuesday denied that enhanced smuggling occurred involving imported steel dispensers in personal care and what not, which local Federal Industry Corp. as the importer.

Customs Deputy Collector Bonnie Tolentino added the assessment value since the shipment of Federal was only tentatively released pending results of valuation that would be made by the Bureau of Customs.

In a statement Federal Steel, Tolentino said the shipment of Federal was also referred to the Valuation and Classification Review Committee (VCRC) before it was released.

He said the practice of referring questionable to the VCRC was meant to help both the importer's policy and customs Congress.

Federal also denied the report, saying it caused "so much humiliation and damage" to the company. Jerwin R. Sino-Cruz, Inquirer Visayas

Fund lack threatens P-Noy road repair target

BAGUIO CITY—Funds being allocated to improve mountain roads in the Cordillera may not be enough to meet targets set by the government for 2016, public works officials said.

Edilberto Castillonan, Cordillera director of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), and Virgilio Rodriguez, cochair of the Regional Development Council (RDC), gave Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Cayetano Paderanga Jr. their computations, detailing how the average allocation for road repair and modernization would complete only 100 km of mountain road a year instead of the mandated 175 km.

Paderanga led the Regional Legislative Executive caravan for the 2011-2016 Philippine Development Plan on Tuesday.

The government has been implementing the Cordillera Road Improvement Project (CRIP)—covering the region's total national road length of 1,051.208 km—since the region was created in 1987.

At last year's Regional Project Monitoring and Evaluation System report, DPWH records showed that 46.58 percent (899.227 km of CRIP) had been paved.

Bautista said developing mountain roads is expensive than paving ordinary provincial roads and needs a different set of rules governing mountain highways.

He said President Aquino had ordered the DPWH to open all national roads by 2014 and all secondary roads before his term ends in 2016, but the pace of work given the current streams of funds will take the region 11 to 12 years to complete the road projects.

Castillonan said the 2011 budget grants the region P3.3 billion, but only P1.1 billion of that amount would be used for road upgrading and rescoping, and the DPWH will require P5.3 billion more to fulfill new year's targets.

Paderanga, however, advised the region's officials to first achieve something using the resources granted to them.

The Cordillera Regional Development Plan for 2011-2016 describes the region's road system as still the worst in the country.

It says, "[The Cordillera's] paved roads account is still below the country's average of 75 percent, [region] 7's [Ilocos] 94 percent and [Region 2's (Cagayan Valley) 72 percent."

Nevertheless, Bautista registered the highest percentage in paved national roads at 100 percent, followed by Benguet at 95.82 percent, while the northern provinces of Apayao and Kalinga obtained a low 16.50 and 26.30 percent, respectively," it said.

But it also said CRIP has made progress.

"Notable accomplishments in the implementation of CRIP include the newly rehabilitated Benguet-Nueva Vizcaya Road (Baguio-Kayapa section), a section of which that forms part of the region's southern east-west lateral-connecting Regions 1 and 2 via Benguet. This section brought closer to Baguio the resorts but feared shrinking farms of Bokod and Kabayan in Benguet, as well as the world-famous rice terraces in Ifugao," it said. Vincent Cabreza, for quirer Northern Luzon

MOUNTAIN TREKS are only for the most hearted because monsoon rains usually trigger landslides that damage mountain roads in the Cordillera, like this stretch in Bugias. STORY CAPTION BY VINCENT CABREZA

Pangasinan offers lessons on rice prices

STA. BARBARA, Pangasinan—Palay prices have remained stable in central Pangasinan despite the peak harvest season, thanks to the rice processing complex (RPC), a Department of Agriculture official said.

Crispulo Sanchez, DA regional technical director for operations, said the rice processing complex kept palay at P17 a kilogram, the buying price set by the National Food Authority.

"The rice processing complex, in a way, helps retard the price of palay here. Before, during peak harvests, palay price usually goes down," he said.

The P1-mil complex costs plus, established on a grant from the Korean government through the Korean International Cooperation Agency (Koica), was built on a government lot here. It began operations in September last year.

It is equipped with modern post-harvest facilities and serves as a one-stop service center for milling, drying and storing palay. It also provides new production technologies to produce high-quality rice.

The complex spans 1,500 square meters with drying capacity of 5,400 metric tons per year or 1,800 bags daily; milling capacity of 50 sacks per hour and storage capacity of 1,500 tons.

"It appears that even local palay traders follow the RPC pricing. They no longer dictate the price like they used to do in the past," Sanchez said.

The price of palay here is higher than the country's average palay price, in which was recorded last week by the Bureau of Agricultural Statistics at P16.31 a kg.

Sanchez said the secret of the RPC is its high milling recovery. "So, even if it buys palay at a high price, this is easily recouped in its milling recovery," he said.

He said it was also a big help on farmers when typhoons "Pedring" and "Quiel" drenched their harvests last year. "The RPC bought the wet palay, which were eventually dried and milled by the RPC, saving the farmers huge losses," he said. Gaudencio Cardinoza, Inquirer Northern Luzon

FARMERS protest plans to import rice at the Department of Agriculture main office in Quezon City. Farmers and officials can learn from the experience of central Pangasinan where rice prices have remained stable. MICHAEL VARCAS

SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM

INVITATION TO BID
ITB No. 2012-03 - Goods

BULK PURCHASE OF SUPPLIES & MATERIALS FOR CY 2012 PART I

Project Description	Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) Amount in Peso	Delivery/ Completion Period	Date/Time Deadline	Time of the Opening of Bids
Bulk Purchase of Supplies & Materials for CY 2012 Part I • Computer Consumables • Office Supplies • Printables • Janitorial Supplies • Medicines / Others	[illegible]	Delivery Period: Within the Contract Period	April 12, 2012 10:00 AM	10:00:01 AM

1. The SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM invites bids for the above Goods. Delivery of the Goods is required as indicated in the Bidding Documents. Bidders should have completed, within the last three (3) years from the date of submission and receipt of bids, a contract similar to the Project. The description of an eligible bidder is contained in the Bidding Documents, particularly, in Section II. Bidding Documents.

2. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using a non-discretionary "pass/fail" criterion as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act (RA) 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act".

Bidding is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, partnerships, or organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to RA 5183.

3. Interested bidders may obtain further information from SSS and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below during 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

4. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be acquired by interested bidders on the date of publication of this ITB from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents in the amount of [illegible] (P[illegible]).

5. The SSS will allow the bidder to present its queries or questions on the Bidding Documents in accordance with Section 22.1 of the IRR. The prospective bidder may submit his queries not later than [illegible] days before the deadline for the submission and receipt of bids.

6. Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before April 12, 2012 10:00 AM. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in any of the acceptable forms and in the amount stated in ITB Clause 18.

7. Bid opening shall be on April 12, 2012 10:00:01 AM at the given address below. Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders' representatives who choose to attend the activity.

8. The SSS reserves the right to reject any and all bids, declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract at any time prior to contract award in accordance with Section 41 of the IRR, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

9. For further information, please refer to:

[illegible]
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Telefax: [illegible]
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ITB No. 2012-03

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CHANGE IS IN THE AIR

We want to believe that art can change the world. Project: EDSA, Boysen KNOxOUT's public art initiative, begins at the most basic level, by cleaning the air we breathe.

Boysen KNOxOUT Project: EDSA aims to lessen air pollution on Metro Manila's main thoroughfare by using air-cleaning paint in large-scale art. Eight artworks covering about 1,000 square meters each will be painted on selected walls and MRT pylons on Epifanio de los Santos Avenue using the paint Boysen KNOxOUT, which transforms specific toxins in the atmosphere into harmless residue.

EDSA is one of the most polluted areas in the country, with average nitrogen oxide (NOx) levels 4 ½ times the safety limit set by the World Health Organization. Scientific tests have established that every square meter of surface painted with KNOxOUT eliminates the NOx and other toxins from the exhaust of 10 cars. This means that each 1,000-sq m artwork will neutralize the harmful emissions of 10,000 cars daily. The acronym in Project: EDSA could stand for "Everyone Deserves Safe Air".

The artists of Project: EDSA aren't just expressing their concern for the environment—they are actively combating pollution.

The first Boysen KNOxOUT Project: EDSA artwork confronts the daily chaos of EDSA with a vision of the symmetry at the heart of all things. The Social Realist Jose Tence Ruiz has painted the San Lorenzo Village wall with arresting marine fractal forms inspired by the work of the naturalist Ernst Haeckel.

In conceptualizing the artwork Tence Ruiz had to answer a number of questions. "How do we make something that might catch attention on Edsa? How do we compete with the huge billboards and their straight-to-the-crotch approach? In the first place, who is our audience?"

The artist decided to address Metro Manila's commuters, the people who ride the bus every day. They travel more slowly down the highway and have time to take in their surroundings.

Then there was the choice of subject. Lead curator Marion Pastor Roces, whose team conceptualized and supervises Boysen KNOxOUT Project: EDSA, was adamant about steering clear of the obvious: Please, no dolphins. "I already do work that is a little on the gruesome side," Tence Ruiz notes. "EDSA commuters are already tired; I didn't want to do something jarring. I was looking for something light and slightly whimsical, but with meaning.

"At the same time it had to be complex. We cannot compete with the seductions of photography unless we do something difficult and complicated."

Tence Ruiz's San Lorenzo wall was launched in May 2011, and today the 1,000 sq-m surface is almost complete. "I ended up doing something I've always been preoccupied with but never thought would apply to Project EDSA—fractals.

The artists of Project: EDSA aren't just expressing their concern for the environment—they are actively combating pollution.

"It occurred to me as work on the wall progressed that times of stress on EDSA I close my eyes and remember my Boy Scout days on the beach in Matabungkay with the starfish, sea cucumbers, barnacles." We are an archipelago after all, never far from water.

Nestled among the strangely familiar images is a single word, "Ganap."

"It's a poetic word, bringing up the fullness of understanding, the completion of pregnancy, a finished cycle, wholeness," Tence Ruiz says. "I just wanted to throw it out there, so the man on the street might have an entry point for thinking of the piece." He is pleased at the way the general public has reacted to the artwork. "The bottled water vendor asked me if Ganap was a party list," he laughs. "And yes, it does sound like it. People ask me if those are aliens or sea monsters, and the work has been described as a tattoo."

The more cynical observer would assume a more extreme reaction to the San Lorenzo artwork, but the piece has not vandalized. When Tence Ruiz's team was applying the first coat of paint, some street artists had left graffiti on the wall. Instead of warning them off, the artist left a note inviting them to join the team of painters. "If you want to put your mark, come and see me." The graffiti artists didn't take him up on his invitation, but they must have appreciated it because "Ganap" has remained untouched.

Of course the greater danger to the artwork is the pollution itself. Jose Tence Ruiz's painting on the San Lorenzo Village wall on EDSA remains vivid and soot-free two months since it was first presented to the public.

"KNOxOUT transforms any painted surface into an air purifier through photocatalysis. When the paint is exposed to light, it reacts with toxic air pollutants and converts them into harmless substances that can be washed away by rain," explains Jameson Ongking, vice-president of Boysen Paints, the sole sponsor of Project: EDSA. The public art initiative has received enthusiastic support from the Metro Manila Development Authority.

"As long as the paint is on the wall and it's exposed to light, it will continue to clean the air," Ongking says. "Using Boysen KNOxOUT on EDSA definitely improves the quality of the air we breathe, but it is not the cure-all. We need a holistic approach to addressing air pollution—fewer and cleaner vehicles on the road, better public transportation, more walking and biking."

Whenever we use motor transport, we contribute to the problem of air pollution. Boysen KNOxOUT gives us a means to become part of the solution. Change is in the air, and it begins with us.

Location: EDSA San Lorenzo Village

BOYSEN® KNOxOUT™ PROJECT : EDSA

www.edsa.me

Smart bombs no, smart pilots yes, says PAF general

From page A1

previously unavailable technology acquired from the United States in blowing the jihadi hideout.

Villarente said the location he left unsolved by the report that sets Bombo such a victory to American soldiers ... It appears we had no capability to strike using our existing bombers."

Villarente said, "Everyone knows how old our aircraft are, like the OV-10s. What we emphasized were smart pilots, four-minute pilots using old aircraft."

Please credit Air Force

Even if smart bomb technology was made available to the PAF, Villarente said "it was impossible to attack guided missiles to aging aircraft."

"So such smart bombs, just smart pilots, please credit us as Air Force," he said.

Villarente reiterated that the pilots involved in the strike undergo recent training with US forces here.

"And we will always place all our pilots under training with the US, we have been training them before, now and in the future," he added.

Ogbin Morocco

The Western Mindanao Command chief, Maj. Gen. Noel Colcoller, also denied the AP report.

He said what the military used in the strikes were two OV-10 aircraft loaded with 500-pound bombs.

"I may have not been here the bombs were extracted but I was informed about it," Colcoller said.

He said the bombing run was the result of weeks of planning.

Two weeks before the operation, "code-named Ogbin Morocco" was launched, the pilots first assisted it out were trained by US forces on "how to use the said aircraft in a manner that they can deliver a successful air strike at dawn."

He said the explosives left no crater "so I also suspected that a new technology was used."

He said he was later told the bombs were set off in mid-air.

Lt. Col. Randolph Cabangbang, spokesperson of the Western Mindanao Command, said they expected issues such as this to be raised, especially by deputies.

"Basically, what we had was a reliable asset, timely intelligence, deliberate planning and well-rounded pilots," he said.

Day 34: How Basa-Guidote lot was sold to Manila city gov't

From page A1

cut that an capital gains tax may be levied on the property.

BGEI certification

The certificate from the corporate secretary of BGEI did not say that Cristina Gotesco was authorized to exercise the P54.7-million payment for the sale of the company's property, Serrano said yesterday.

Dandan in the 2007 certificate from BGEI corporate secretary and Gotesco's mother, Asuncion Basa Roco, Antonio said Cristina was appointed as the exclusive agent to negotiate, sell and dispose of the property in Sampaloc, Manila, and to execute, sign and deliver documents necessary for the sale, transfer and disposition of the property and was authorized to a 5-percent commission of the total purchase price.

"There is nothing there that says the cost personally, private [payment]," Atienza admitted in reply to private prosecutor Renato Bantoto.

Sarmiento also was able to get out from Atienza that his secretary for nine years while he was city mayor of Manila, Jovelyn Encarnacion Sison, was the daughter of Ricardo Gotesco Jr. the decision has school.

Atienza said the check was issued to Cristina "current for the Basa-Guidote Enterprises Inc."

If BGEI sold the property, Antonio Providence Aunt Perez Emilio asked why then did the city government issue the check to Cristina.

For transaction's security

"It's for the security of the transaction and of the check, because[it has to be responsible. We don't know Basa Guidote Enterprises. The party wants negotiating with was represented by Cristina Gotesco. She should be responsible for the check. The check is for the corporation," Atienza said.

When Bantoto pointed out that a corporation had stockholders, a board of directors and officers, among others, Atienza maintained that the city government dealt only with her.

Asked by Bantoto why they did not issue the check under BGEI's name, Atienza said the city government did exactly that by issuing the check to Cristina "entered" for the BGEI.

"I don't think we can be sure [without the words 'entered for']," Atienza said.

No due diligence

Under questioning by Bolos, Atienza admitted that he did not exercise due diligence in scrutinizing BGEI documents before the issuance of the check.

Atienza said he read the March 2003 deed of absolute sale but did not scrutinize it. He said it was the city government lawyers who scrutinized the corporate secretary's certificate. Neither did he ask for a copy of the board resolution as well as the stockholder's resolution authorizing the sale.

"So I said, it passed through the scrutiny of the city legal department. I presumed that all their acts were correct," he said.

He also admitted that he did not ask if the BGEI still existed at the time.

Atienza confirmed that the check appeared to show that it was supposed to be deposited to Gotesco's account. He said it was only now that he learned that indeed that was deposited in her account.

Deposited where?

Chief Justice Corona has yet to turn over the P54.7-million proceeds from the "negotiated sale" of a Basa Guidote property between his wife Cristina and the city government in 2003, actually landed in his own bank deposit accounts.

This was learned yesterday by Marikina Rep. Miro Quimbo, a prosecution spokesperson, who said that the defense was merely using the property as a cuisine.

GO TO A16

Gov't using smart bombs for first time vs Abu bandits

From page A1

WAITING Members of police scanning a street in Jolo where three more wanted leaders of the Al-Qaida-linked terror group Abu Sayyaf and Jemaah Islamiyah were believed killed in a US-assisted air strike early February. An Associated Press report says two aging Philippine Air Force planes unleashed a surprise high-tech weapon: US-satellite-guided bombs in the attack.

A US FIGHTER bomber armed with smart bombs

several hours after delivering a half-a-ton fat-nose mountainous. Forces moved around 9 a.m. on Feb. 2.

Thermal imaging from a US drone, described by two of the senior officials, showed the at-bandits formed three gunmen in a small a cluster of dismounted men, huts and trees, while various soldiers lay dead and wounded in the pitch darkness.

Although it remains unclear whether all three of the most-wanted terrorists were killed, the introduction of smart bombs reflects shifting battlefields and strategies.

Less manpower-intensive

The United States has been touring the Philippine military since shortly after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, providing advice, assistance and intelligence, including drone surveillance, but the smart bombs are the first major high-tech hardware supplied to the Philippines.

The bombs offer a less manpower-intensive way to combat the Abu Sayyaf and others at a time when both the Philippines and the US military want to focus resources on missions with China in the West Philippine Sea (South China Sea).

They also dovetail with a change in internal threats from massive offensives to surgical, intelligence-driven strikes that target holdouts of the battered Abu Sayyaf bandits.

GPS-guided

The four senior officials said the strike on the Abu Sayyaf has employed GPS-guided bombs, a previously unavailable technology acquired from the United States under a confidential military-assistance project.

They spoke on condition of anonymity because they aren't authorized to discuss flaws dealt with the matter.

A Philippine military document detailing the project, a copy of which was seen by AP, said US defense contractor Raytheon Co. was to deliver 22 kits last year to convert conventional bombs into precision-guided munitions that could be launched from the OV-10 turboprop.

Accompanying that transfer of weapons equipment upgrades to allow the OV-10s to deploy the bombs and two test runs.

A military spokesperson, Col. Arnulfo Marcelo Burgos, said the Armed Forces of the Philippines "neither confirms nor denies the existence of such munitions raising operational security reasons. However, its pilots have been training rigorously to further improve their proficiency, particularly in the precise delivery of munitions to identified targets."

Combatants spared

Many Western, Middle Eastern and Asian countries have acquired smart bombs since the weapons first widely used by the US-led coalition in the 1990-91 Gulf War.

They have guidance kits and fins and use the US GPS satellite system, laser and other technologies to correct on targets.

Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin praised "the carefully planned precision attack" in a statement days after the strike.

The well-planned assault, he said, avoided the military casualties that often occurred in ground raids.

Gazmin would not respond to questions about the new bombs in an interview with AP last week, but he said that nobody from the Americans has given the military "absolute guide such as enabling pilots to fly at night."

Training with US drones has focused on ways to avoid hitting non-combatants and waiting resources, he said, citing last month's incidents.

"We review videos to make sure they were all together at a certain time so that was the time to hit," Gazmin said. "So we took off early morning and bombed them, destroying four bombs. Not one survivedit."

The Philippine military announced that a top Malaysian terrorist, Zulkifli bin Hir, also known as Marwan, was among the dead, along with Filipino persons married into terrorist Muhamada Ali—whose relatives in Mamasapano—and Abu Sayyaf commander Gumbs Issik Undos's cousin.

$5-M bounty

But doubts have arisen about the fates of the two foreign fugitives, and many government reports seen by AP contend that Marwan and Muamyah survived the air strike with minor wounds after they found the boats or the OV-10s and fled.

Richmond Jose also 15 militants were killed in the barrage but others quickly dropped away the dead, making it difficult to confirm who was killed, according to military officials.

Marwan is on the FBI list of most-wanted terrorists and has a $5-million bounty on his head. Jemaah had been a key target because he facilitated foreign radicals such as Marwan and Muamyah and had been blamed for deadly bombings and kidnappings.

The military presumes Marwan and Muamyah are dead until an investigation shows otherwise, Burgos said, though he added that huge cash rewards for information that helped find the militants have been put on hold.

Government spies

The air strike shook the terrorist network, according to the government reports.

The operation of the attack, and that it came in the dark, told them that they were being targeted with more advanced technology.

It also indicated there were government spies in their ranks who had tracked them from their long-hunting foreign fugitives would make them stagnate for attack.

"They have become very wary of things and equipment that are being brought into their camp, suspecting those were laden with bombs, either sent to or used to 'track them,'" Estimata said.

Marwan and Muamyah were lying low with gunmen in a hilly mountain stronghold, the government reports said, but the big Abu Sayyaf bandit in the area, Basilan, was still on the run, according to military officials.

Sakkina, who is in his 70s and the group's most senior leader, has long been wary of outsiders—unlike Jumdail, who also had been entering ill villages as a quasi-doctor, providing a way for government surveillance.

Bearer of the Sword

The Abu Sayyaf—or Bearer of the Sword—was founded in 1991 on Basilan Island. Without any specific objective of establishing an Islamic state, and rather to wage jihad, or holy war, but lost its key leaders, early in combat, settling it on a violent path of extremism and criminality.

Today, the Abu Sayyaf has degenerated into a loose confederation with 380 raging fighters and no central leader. But the bandit group remains resilient and a more violent, a military assessment said, citing 74 shootout-committed last year, including 17 kidnappings, 16 bombings and 14 killings and ambushes—far more than early of the five previous years.

Still to setbacks are reflected in a poster of the most-wanted terrorists and bandits printed recently by troops by the US and Philippine governments.

Of the 24 portraits, 19 have been killed or captured. The deaths of four—Marwan and Jumdail—are unconfirmed. Only three others remain at large. AP

Binay: This is government of reaction, not anticipation

By Doris C. Dumlao

WHEN it comes to addressing informal settlers, the government is not proactive enough in preparing relocation sites, Vice President Jejomar Binay said yesterday.

"I was criticizing that [that is a government of reaction rather than anticipation," Binay said in an Wednesday interview in Davao with the Chamber of Thrift Banks when asked what other initiatives the government was doing to address the issue.

Binay, who also chairs the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council, said the government must acquire lands for potential relocation sites and avoid building houses.

But Binay said a housing program must be inclusive. He said a comprehensive shelter plan, which includes economic job opportunities on the relocation site, was in place for informal settlers in Metro Manila.

To support these projects, P68 billion has been set aside to help within Five years 300,000 informal settler families living in "danger zones," he said, referring to areas prone to flooding.

Another measure is the organization of the socialized housing or Pag-Ibig Fund or the Home Development Mutual Fund to include household helpers or homeworkers, public utility drivers and vendors. This is quite overdue.

Binay said he was sorry that the release of Pag-Ibig loans slowed down last year. He noted that a big portion of Pag-Ibig's P50.36-billion budget for 2011 had not been disbursed.

"This is a result of that unfortunate incident with a certain corporation," he said.

"If one intervention wasn't timely, it would have resulted in a loss of about P1.5 billion. So we had to review the processes, especially the list of members ship," he said.

Binay was referring to the Globe-Bantigue controversy in which the housing developer was investigated for allegedly selling homes to "ghost" borrowers. Globe-Bantigue was able to siphon off billions of pesos from Pag-Ibig for its projects.

Indigenous people, meanwhile, were among the new beneficiaries of the socialized housing program, according to the Vice President.

He said the indigenous people, many of them poor, were also in need of such safety nets.

As an example, Binay reported that the National Housing Authority had approved a housing program for an initial 1,000 of Aeta families. It will be implemented within the year.

Binay urged thrift bankers to use housing microfinance to help more poor families buy homes. Business group Rotary is hosting the 11th edition.

He also asked local government units to help solve the backlog through community mortgage programs.

Bypassed Cabinet members to be reappointed

By Norman Bordadora

MALACAÑANG yesterday said Cabinet members who failed to get confirmation from the Commission on Appointments would again be appointed to their respective posts by President Aquino.

Secretary Edwin Lacierda, President Aquino's spokesperson, also expressed the administration's hope that the bicameral body would eventually confirm the appointments of the nominees.

The executives who have yet to be confirmed include Interior Secretary Jesse Robredo, Social Welfare Secretary Corazon Soliman, Justice Secretary Leila de Lima, Environment Secretary Ramon Paje and Tourism Secretary Ramon Jimenez.

"[President Aquino] has every confidence in the Cabinet secretaries. For sec. reason or another, their confirmation have yet to be approved. But the President nominates a team in those Cabinet members and so the President will nominate to reappoint them," Lacierda said.

"And we hope that, at certain point in time, the Commission on Appointments will find favor with these five Cabinet secretaries and confirm them," he added.

Corrections

IN THE MAR. 15 ISSUE, a story on Page A12—"9 New ally finds former candidate returns"—misstated the number of land parcels that Dolmatic Hocms bought from Cristina Corona, wife of impeached Chief Justice Renato Corona. Hocms, a second cousin of the Chief Justice, bought seven—not eight—parcels of land from Cristina Corona in 1998.

* * *

IN THE MAR. 14 ISSUE, a front page commentary—"On 30th year dog bears common sign"—omitted the first name of the Supreme Court's budget and disbursement officer. She is Arnedo Buyugan.

* * *

IN THE MAR. 21 ISSUE, a story on the Second Priest Slaps—"Lack of quorum stalls RH debates in House"—misnewsstyle attributed to former Health Secretary Esperanza Cabral the statement, "lawmakers 'continue to have blood in their hands' because of their continued failure to pass the much-needed RH bill." The statement was a paraphrase of sentiments—not a direct quote attributed to a particular person—stated in a recent press conference, during which some lawmakers and family planning advocates renewed their call to put the reproductive health bill back onto.

* * *

Readers may mail their requests for corrections of factual errors in articles in the Star Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 185 Absolut Center Bldg., 5th corner Ayala Ave., Makati City, fax No. 897-4192-96, e-mail address: stardesk@inquirer.com.ph.

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ISSN 0119-2642 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER Vol. 27 No. 130

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Tell us your feelings! inquirer.opinion@gmail.com; fax 896-0967

Publication Info: Philippine Daily Inquirer, 5th Floor, Philippine Daily Inquirer Bldg., Chino Roces Ave. Ext., Makati City, Philippines; P.O. Box 4252 Makati Central Post Office; Telephone 896-6000; Telefax 896-6060; Subscription Rates: Metro Manila ₱1,800/month, Luzon ₱1,800/month, Visayas ₱1,800/month, Mindanao ₱1,800/month; Overseas Rates: Asia $100/month, Europe $100/month, North America $100/month; Subscription Inquiries: Telephone 896-6000; Telefax 896-6060; Subscription E-mail: circulation@inquirer.com.ph

Gun-grabbing killings

EDITORIAL

MAYOR Alfredo Lim of Manila has come to the defense of police officers Ramir Dimagiba and Rachel Beniten, who were slapped homicide charges by the Manila Police District for the fatal shooting of two detainees in the MPD headquarters on the night of March 15. Per the police account, detainee Roderick Solverez, 28, was emptying the cell pantry in the toilet area under the supervision of Dimagiba when he grabbed the cop's gun, which accidentally went off and hit his cohort and co-detainee Cecilio Bacolo Jr., 19. Beniten then rushed to the scene and shot Solverez dead. A day earlier, Lim was reported as having extracted from Solverez and Bacolo a confession that they had raped and murdered a 7-year-old girl.

A former MPD chief himself, Lim said Dimagiba and Beniten deserved commendation rather than an investigation. But the mayor misses the point. A commendation for what? For killing detained suspects in their custody? At the least, the episode should show another instance of police incompetence. The fact that it took place right in the headquarters of "Manila's finest," at the MPD hierarchically kills itself; should show that police incompetence has become worse. Or that policemen have lost their composure. Apparently, gone are the days when a citizen would flee at the sight of cops for fear of being framed or of suffering the brunt of their drunken illegal discharge. The botched rescue of foreign tourists taken hostage by an ex-cop at Rizal Park in 2010 (in which Mayor Lim and the MPD were involved, and which resulted in the Philippines' humiliation in the global community) and the toilet incidents on March 15 have exposed Manila policemen for what they are: not the "Finest," but bungling cops of the Mack Sennet Keystone variety; characters straight from, not "CSI" or "Hawaii Five-O," but slapstick.

But what happened on March 15 is not funny. Two men who had allegedly confessed to raping and killing a child in order to satisfy their lust after reading sexy stories were killed while in police detention. While some people may claim that Solverez and Bacolo got their bloody but just desserts for their confessed actions, it is incumbent on the state to put them through the judicial process and, if found guilty, impose on them the maximum punishment. No shortcuts.

Of course, for Mayor Lim, who earned the moniker "Dirty Harry" for his controversial extrajudicial methods, no question lingers. The cops gave Solverez his due for allegedly grabbing their gun, accidentally killing his cohort, and trying to kill them. The incidents is as bright as day for Lim, who had obviously been convinced of their guilt even before he got their confession. (When the two men were presented to him on March 12, the mayor asked them pointblank in Filipino: "Can you still sleep soundly after what you've done?")

Commission on Human Rights Chair Loretta Rosales and the National Police Commission are backing an investigation of the March 15 incident, noting an apparent pattern involving MPD detainees being killed after allegedly snatching their police escort's firearms. The circumstances are indeed suspicious. Last month, Chinese national Geng Shu Tieng, a suspect in the murder of his girlfriend Zhao Chun Lan, allegedly shot himself after taking his escort's pistol while on board a service vehicle on the way to the prosecutor's office. Also last month, a criminology student arrested for allegedly shooting a cop was also killed for purportedly snatching the gun of an officer who was taking him to a hospital for a checkup.

The fact that policemen have become the target of gun-snatching by their detainees should indicate a new criminal pathology or a worsening laxity on the cops' part to protect their weapons. If they can't even prevent criminals from snatching their firearms, then how can they be entrusted with public safety and order? The question arises: Have Manila cops become wimps and hopelessly incompetent?

On the other hand, there is the suspicion of extrajudicial killing. But if policemen shortcut the rules or do away with them altogether, on the assumption that suspects are guilty anyway and should not enjoy due process and the presumption of innocence, they foster a self-serving regime where no rules apply, competence is considered alien, and recklessness becomes the norm.

Peace-loving and law-abiding citizens should not entrust public safety and order to savages and cold-blooded killers.

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'Sin tax' reform bill will encourage smuggling

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

SOMETIME AGO, I wrote against the proposed "sin tax" bill that would increase the excise taxes on cigarettes and liquor, driving their prices up to as much as 1,000 times the present prices. Of course, the excise of those pushing the bill is that cigarettes and liquor are bad for the health and the high prices will discourage their consumption.

That is also the lame excuse of other countries that raised their excise taxes on cigarettes and liquor. But that is not the real reason. The real reason is greed. The government simply wants to squeeze more money out of taxpayers.

But it did not turn out the way they said it would. Consumption did not decrease; on the contrary, consumption increased. Also, while the revenue from the tax taxes increased in the beginning, it fell drastically later. What? Increase of smuggling.

That premise is as sure as the sun rises in the east in the morning and sets in the west in the evening. When the price of any product goes up, enterprising smugglers bring in cheaper products. They can afford to sell cheap because they are not paying any taxes. So instead of discouraging consumption, the very high prices actually encourage it because the smuggled products are very cheap.

You remember the time when you can buy smuggled cigarettes at any street corner in the Philippines and the smugglers became filthy rich? You want to bring that kind of lawlessness back?

I have not changed my view on the sin tax bill and what it would do to the country. But in the interest of fair play, I will give those here a fair shot in response to the debates.

The proposed measure, House Bill No. 6727, was authored by Rep. Joseph Emilio Abaya of Cavite. Or it only coincidence that Cavite was also the center of operations of the cigarette smuggler I mentioned earlier? Does it mean we are in for another wave of cigarette smuggling? It is strongly supported by the Department of Finance (DOF). But of course. It would mean more taxes collected by the DOF whose main purpose is to raise revenues for the government. The measure of success of the secretary of finance is how much money he raised.

The proposed sin tax reform measure, according to the DOF, will dismantle the existing excise classification frame of certain brands of cigarettes, which "protect the market shares of existing companies at the expense of public health."

Public health, my eye! There is no provision in the Abaya bill at all to discourage smoking and drinking. They just say the high prices would discourage consumption.

It doesn't work that way. Smoking and drinking are addictions. Like smoking pot or taking prohibited drugs. It is very difficult to stop this addiction. Many have tried but failed.

Merely raising prices won't stop them from smoking or drinking. They will find ways to get money to go on with the habit, maybe reduce the food for their children, or stopping some of them from going to school. Or maybe they will steal, as some drug addicts do.

The proposal of former Health Secretary Esperanza Cabral to put graphic photographs of smokers with lung or mouth cancer on the packs of cigarettes should in some cases of those non-stopping smoking, and I don't understand why this was not implemented.

Let's go back to the letter. "Way back in 1996 when Republic Act 8240 was enacted, taxes thus from tobacco and alcohol products were set small prices (sarao) (taxes). The products sold as low-priced cigarettes at that time that eventually have been repackaged as premium-priced cigarettes continue to be sam-sam low-priced. Now entrants in the market, meanwhile, are taxed according to their current net retail price. In other words, there is a lack of level playing field."

The DOF said that a survey conducted by the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) in late 2011 showed the discrepancy in the case of Winston FL 20's and LI American Blend Charcoal Filter, with the former being an "old brand" and the latter a "new brand."

The FOB and Winston were sold at P41.93 per pack, and American Blend at P25.00. The price difference is less than P1, but data still showed that Winston was taxed only P7.56 per pack, while American Blend had a higher rate of P11.

The DOF clarified that removing the brands and price classification freeze would not disadvantage locally produced cigarettes since imported ones are those that are premium in the list counting such a distinction.

As to distilled spirits, the DOF reiterated that the excise tax reform was necessary "to comply with the ruling of the World Trade Organization." Sens. Miriam Defensor Santiago would not only result in higher revenues for the government but would improve public health services for the Filipinos as well.

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Listening to their arguments, I concede there is no question in principle. There is, however, questions or issues about the risk it would impose on the local industry, particularly on employment, the prices of products in the market, and whether it would indeed increase revenues and at the same time reduce the smoking incidence. In the experience of some countries that also raised taxes, results show otherwise: Revenue did not increase and in fact decreased, and consumption did not decrease but, on the contrary, actually increased.

Letters from the learned readers.

'Sin City' no more

COMMENTARY

Belinda A. Aquino

Olongapo exudes an energy of entrepreneurship and vitality as PH's first 'Freeport City'

HONOLULU—PART of the reason Olongapo was included on the Philippine itinerary of the recent trade mission from Hawaii was that the city has become an outstanding model of local development after its previous long-standing image as a "City of Sin." The trade mission was headed by Philippine Commission on Interstate Mores Manila interested in business partnerships with the Honolulu-based Filipino Chamber of Commerce in its future missions to promote closer Hawaii-Philippines economic relations.

The trade mission also recognized that Subic is a potential retirement home for thousands of Filipino elderly who retire every year but cannot afford the prohibitive costs of moving to the United States. Subic offers the amenities of a developed country while providing a familiar home atmosphere. Even more PH spines, particularly the Japanese, want to retire in the Philippines where the cost of living is more affordable than in their home countries.

Dr. Dean Alegado, my host and former friend, is colleague at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, who has opted to retire in his native Olongapo, gave me a quick tour of the city as it looks today, including the once infamous R.M. Avenue just outside what used to be the US naval base at Subic Bay. Now a vibrant cosmopolitan center commonly resembling "Little America" that is able to compete globally with its relatively developed neighboring cities. Infrastructure, Olongapo exudes an energy of entrepreneurship and vitality as the first Freeport City in the Philippines.

Of course, the visitors would be unlikely to miss the familiar "Gordon brand" of leadership displayed all over Olongapo. It is one of the most enduring examples of durability and continuity in Philippine politics. Political dynasties come and go but the "Gordon Gang" seems to remain. In urban results, there is a lack of level playing field."

The DOF said that a survey conducted by the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) in late 2011 showed the discrepancy in the case of Winston FL 20's and LI American Blend Charcoal Filter, with the former being an "old brand" and the latter a "new brand."

The FOB and Winston were sold at P41.93 per pack, and American Blend at P25.00. The price difference is less than P1, but data still showed that Winston was taxed only P7.56 per pack, while American Blend had a higher rate of P11.

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Bobby Gordon, a musical artist to boot, has to effed become not just a non-employee but like-wise the father of modern Olongapo. He is imbued with the ethics of hard work and competitiveness. His motto for running the booming city is "Fighting for Excellence."

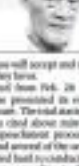
He proudly showed the trade mission delegation the "symbols of progress" under his watch, ranging from a day care center in City Hall itself for children of employees to state-of-the-art health facilities.

Supporting institutions to promote education, expanding resources for conventions and meetings, increasing library resources and initiating "best practices" in other public endeavors are all part of Bong Gordon's visionary agenda. He is especially proud of his investment to achieve the "pivotal transformation" of Olongapo from a former "Sin City" to a "topnotch destination" for both foreign and domestic visitors, hardcore and aggressive, he denies that his politics is about "winning and prevailing, no matter the cost." "It has become a passport in his very sight.

It is hoped that increasing political democratization is also part of Bong Gordon's agenda. Expanding political participation, especially among the younger generations of leaders and citizens who will take over will certainly boost further the stock of Olongapo as a model city for the Philippines and exemplar for good governance that we can all be proud of.

A Filipino trade mission delegate from Hawaii, Dr. Belinda A. Aquino is professor emeritus at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, where she served as professor of political science and international studies as well as director of the Center for Philippine Studies for 23 years.

Filipinos want a fair trial, says survey



ANALYSIS

Armando Doronila

TWO FINDINGS highlighted the March 20-22 survey of Pulse Asia on the impeachment trial of Chief Justice Renato Corona: First, nearly 7 in 10 Filipinos (69 percent) expect the senators to be fair and impartial in the performance of their duties as judges when they decide on the impeachment case; second, 56 percent think that Filipinos as well accept and respect the senators' impartiality, whatever decision, whether most of the people like it or not.

These findings augur well for a non-confusion outcome of the trial, barring a disruption of the impeachment process. They indicate that most of the people have been impressed by the way the trial was conducted by its initial stages, that the people have been given a demonstration that institutional approaches (such as the impeachment court) to fight the scourge of government are working, and that the people now seem disposed to accept a fair outcome of the trial on the issue of evidence. This is a positive development of the trial.

These two measures closely related to each other, meaning that the second is premised on the people's perception that the trial is fair—a condition that is all important to the acceptance of the outcome (the verdict). The latest finding expresses the majority's commitment to all proceedings. Seventy-six (76) percent (or 74 percent) and socioeconomic groupings (76 percent to 71 percent). Only 22 percent say the senator-judges will not be fair—a view more pronounced in Mindanao (30 percent > than in Metro Manila and the rest of Luzon (18 percent to 19 percent). Less than 1 in 10 (8 percent) are undecided.

The second finding (acceptance of the verdict) is also shared by majorities in all geographic areas (51 percent to 58 percent) and every socioeconomic class (53 percent to 63 percent). The Visayas is the exception, where only 46 percent say they will accept the verdict, whatever it is. In sum, whether the majority of Filipinos like it or not, will be respected and accepted by them, with 45 percent saying that most Filipinos will accept only the decision that they have Nationwide, 56 percent of Filipinos say that most Filipinos will accept and respect only the decision that they favor.

The survey was conducted from Feb. 26 to March 9, before the debates presented its evidence in the impeachment court. The trial started on Jan. 16. The two findings cited above mirror public confidence in the impeachment process, where the presiding judge and several of the senator-judges demonstratively tried hard to conduct a low-key and evenhanded trial according to the rules of court. The results on the above issues have been less controversial than the other results of the survey, for instance, public opinion is split on whether or not members of the House of Representatives has reached the impeachment proceeds. While 51 percent of Filipinos say the think members of the House have reached the impeachment of Corona, 33 percent say otherwise. Twenty percent of Filipinos are undecided. Forty-six percent of Manilans say the impeachment process was has reached in the House, while 44 percent in the rest of Luzon believe otherwise.

What 47 percent of Filipinos think Corona is guilty of the charges filed against him, 43 percent are undecided. Only 3 percent believe he is innocent. Another 3 percent say they did not have enough basis to make a decision.

Thirty-six percent of the respondents who say Corona is guilty formed their opinion in the course of the trial, while 34 percent say their opinion was formed even before the trial began. Among the regions, Mindanao accounted for the biggest percentage of the respondents (54 percent) who found Corona guilty. Corona was also found guilty by the majority of those in the ABC socioeconomic class (53 percent), which is made up of the affluent and middle class, presumably the educated and best informed citizens.

Half of the respondents in Metro Manila, the best informed and most exposed to the issue media, say Corona is guilty. The guilty opinion is shared by 48 percent of respondents in the rest of Luzon, 37 percent in the Visayas, 40 percent among Class E, and 45 percent among Class D, with both classes embracing the poor and the poorest.

Those who say Corona is innocent are broken down as follows: 5 percent among Class ABC, 3 percent among Class E and in the rest of Luzon, 4 percent in Metro Manila, and the Visayas, 6 percent among Class D and 9 percent in Mindanao. Most Filipinos (84 percent) followed developments in the trial, with 16 percent following developments most the results of the poll survey showing that 47 percent of the respondents held Corona guilty, however, Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile, the presiding judge, was far from impressed. He told the reporters, and not poll surveys, would decide the guilt or innocence of Corona.

"I will look at the evidence. If we are surveys is correct or not to convict a person charged in the courts, then we don't need courts. All we have to do is conduct surveys whenever somebody is charged," Enrile said.

He said he was not preoccupied with surveys because the job of the impeachment court was to administer justice.

Clearly, the critical message of the survey to Most Filipinos want a fair trial, nothing less.

Vice Consul Mok

UNTIL ABOUT 13 years ago, I would visit the Chinese Cemetery in Manila every All Saints' Day to pay homage to my maternal grandparents. The ceremony would be teeming with the living, including tourists, curious about this City of the Dead with its grand mausoleums.

The cemetery has several memorials or shrines put up to honor the Chinese Filipinos and Americans who gave up their lives for the Philippines during World War II. I knew of, but never really looked into, these shrines. I forgot them when one day, finally stopped going to the cemetery, after my grandparents' remains were moved into a church columbarium.

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

Last Tuesday I returned to the cemetery with a group called Tombowl, the cemetery being our last stop in a planned educational tour for students, to raise their awareness of Chinese Filipino culture. Tombowl set up information on the cemetery and the war memorials, as this time I regarded the shrines with reverence. I walked slowly around the area, overwhelmed by the number of martyrs whose names were listed in the memorials.

In another part of the cemetery is the Chinese-Kuomintang Young memorial honoring staff members of the Chinese consulate in Manila, eight of whom were imprisoned, tortured and executed. The memorial is named after the Chinese consul general. The Japanese had told the Chinese their lives would be spared if they would authorize the Executive Yuan Pro-gang-ye Iglesias, which was Japan's ploy to reveal collaborators from the countries they had invaded. For the Philippines in particular, which was at that time under the American, Japan's slogan of "Asia for Asians" was attractive.

But the Chinese consulate staff refused to cooperate, and some managed to escape to the countryside before Consul General Wu and similar fates because they refused to collaborate with the Japanese. Some were arrested right after the Japanese invaded the Philippines; others were underground, joining Filipino guerrillas, and were killed in battle.

It was an emotional visit and I told the Quiboloanon staff we definitely had to give time to explain to the students and those visiting the memorial. I also committed myself to looking up more information on the involvement of ethnic Chinese in resisting the Japanese occupation.

Uncle Fred

Imagine my surprise then when, two days after the visit to the cemetery, I received a phone call from someone in the United States who asked if I could help him find information on his father, Vice Consul Clement K. T. Mok (Chinese name: Mok Kai Tiet), who was one of those killed by the Japanese. Even more startling was that the caller was a family friend, Fred Mok, who I always knew as "Uncle Fred," a Chinese-American living in California, rather than as someone who had lived in the Philippines.

For the next hour Uncle Fred told me about his father and life in Manila. He knew a mailed some Chinese newspapers articles he had found, allowing me to piece together a story of horror and valor.

Vice Consul Mok was born in 1895 and was among several young Chinese sent by their governments to study in the United States and Europe, with the hope that they could bring back western science and technology to rebuild China. The young Mok got a degree in electrical engineering from Yale, and worked with General Electric as an inspector of electric motors installed in oil submarines. After he returned to China he was assigned to set up a power station in Shanghai.

In 1929 Mok agreed to join the Chinese consulate in Manila. He came over with his family, which included Uncle Fred, then only a few months old. He was later appointed vice consul and posted in Manila for 13 years, until his death.

The Moks lived in Santa and then later in San Mateo, Manila. Uncle Fred, who is retired, lived in Quezon City until 1st Ignacio, turning down three offers for more attractive consular posts.

After the Japanese invaded China in 1937, Vice Consul Mok began to warn Filipinos and the local Chinese about Japan's expected ambitions. Uncle Fred recalled that his father called a meeting of Chinese leaders in Manila to discuss aggression for the Chinese Commercial News, a local newspaper produced by Fu Si Nang, later to be executed by the Japanese. Many of the local Chinese shared Mok's apprehensions, and organized various activities to raise awareness on Japanese aggression, including a boycott of Japanese goods. Among those who attended the meeting was Chinese consul general Yu Chi Ching, who was Dr. Joaquin Lim, who had become a close friend of Vice Consul Mok.

Japanese occupation

The Japanese bombed Nicholas Airfield in December 1941 and within a month, they had occupied several Southeast Asian countries, including the Philippines. There were many Japanese living in the Philippines even before the invasion and they had been monitoring the local Chinese and their anti-Japanese activities. So when the Japanese occupied the Philippines, one of the first things they did was arrest the anti-Japanese leaders, including the consulate staff.

Vice Consul Mok and the other members of the consulate staff were first detained in the bases of the UP president, where they could still receive visitors. Uncle Fred was only 12 then, but he remembers his father's concern about retaining offers of freedom in exchange for an endorsement of the Japanese occupation. Mok quoted the American patriot Patrick Henry when hearing early one regret, which was to have only one life to offer for one's country.

The Japanese transferred the Chinese consulate staff to Fort Santiago, which was notorious for the torture of prisoners. And then the staff disappeared. Uncle Fred's mother, like many other Chinese, supported the anti-Japanese guerrillas all throughout the war, hoping that her husband was still alive, perhaps in the mountains. But, as the years came to an end, she learned that he was executed together with the other members of the consulate staff in April 1942.

After the war Mok's widow and her children emigrated to the United States. Uncle Fred became a successful stockbroker but never forgot his father and recently began to look for his remains. Uncle Fred's search led him to contact the vice consul's relatives are buried in a cemetery in Nanjing. He will travel to Nanjing in April, for the Chinese Qingming, "to sweep my father's grave."

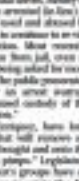
Chinese journalists have heard of his visit and asked to interview him on his visit overall 13 years in Manila, but Uncle Fred said he had very little information on his father other than memories.

I told Uncle Fred that I had just visited the Chinese Cemetery and that I felt I owed his father and the other martyrs a tribute. So I write today to honor them, with the hope that more readers might have additional information, or stories and anecdotes, of Vice Consul Mok.

(I have another appeal, and that is for readers to document other unsung heroes in our families and histories. Time is running out; the survivors of World War II are now quite elderly. We owe it to our many patriots and martyrs to keep their memories, and efforts, alive.

(Email: tmail@inquirer.com.ph)

Courts, Congress failing women



AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

IN 1999, the Swedish Parliament passed the Sex Purchase Law that prosecutes the clients of a prostitute but views the prostitute (whether man, woman or child) as the "victim" of the crime.

In an interview in 2008, a member of Sweden's human trafficking unit of the national police board said the results: "We don't have a problem with prostitutes. We have a problem with men who buy sex." Customers caught having dealings with prostitutes are prohibited with fines or up to six months in prison plus "the humiliation of public exposure."

I do remember a speaker from Sweden so as to recommend conference on trafficking explaining that the law was also intended to deter the law's passage, the number of men patronizing prostitutes dropped dramatically. It was not because of the law, she explained, "but because TV camera operators were instructed to shoot corners where prostitutes were being arrested and the customers were afraid of being exposed." (The 2008 amendment to the law) had to pay a fine after submitting his bail paid a male prostitute.)

There are, of course, critics of the law, including women in sex work, who say the law has only driven prostitution underground, where "more dangerous" situations for the women, thus by letting on the culpability of customers and pimps, the law has increased demand for prostitutes and "reshaped attitudes toward the sex trade."

Critics the situation in Sweden with not other nations in the Philippines, where a legislature are amending Article 202 of the Revised Penal Code would strike the crime of "vagrancy" from the penal code but retain penalties for "prostitution" (which are defined in the law as only women).

The so-called bill has been passed by both the House of Representatives and the Senate (with assembly hasty and in secrecy) and is now on the desk of President Aquino, waiting for his signature—or his inaction in which case it would lapse into law. Women's groups are urging P-Noy to veto it.

* * *

FOR SOME years, wealth Jean Enriquez, executive director of the Coalition against Trafficking of Women-Asia Pacific (CATW-AP), "survivors have been harassed, trafficked and criminalized by the very system that is supposed to protect them." Enriquez is referring to the raids conducted by police and social workers on establishments where women are employed as prostitutes, and the subsequent detention of these women in rehabilitation centers.

In 2006, when the Philippine government presented its compliance report before the Experts' Committee of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in Geneva, the committee called on the government "to take urgent and effective measures to end the exploitation of prostitution of women, including through the discouragement of the demand for prostitution. It should also facilitate the reintegration of prostitutes into society and provide rehabilitation, social integration and economic empowerment programs for women and girls who are victims of exploitation and trafficking." The comments also called on government to fund nongovernment organizations working with victims of prostitution and trafficking to find alternative means of income or training.

Now I wonder how the Cedaw committee would find, when the Philippines have it later this year, when it finds out that not only has the recommendation been ignored, but that the legislature even went ahead and singled out women prostitutes for particular punishment.

Then again, given our government's penchant for signing international conventions and covenants then ignoring the meaning and intent of these documents completely, should we be surprised?

* * *

A RECENT visitor to the country was lawyer Pravda Patten, a member of the Cedaw expert committee who yesterday addressed a group of women's NGOs, academics, government officials and survivors of violence in a "Forum on Cedaw and Women's Access to Justice."

A common theme among the talks of Patten (who hails from Mauritius) and the other speakers was that, while the Philippines has passed a remarkable number of laws guaranteeing and protecting women's human rights, "police and courts are failing women in the delivery of justice."

Lira Martinez of the Philippine Legal Assistance Center spoke of how justice is systematically denied abused women, particularly rape victims. "In fact, in cases where the act is the promulgation of a rape case filed by a dead woman, who lost the case, that illustrates profound that as long as the legal system remains unsympathetic and unresponsive to the problems of the Dead, there is no way these cases get to the courts. Even some have been submitted to the Cedaw under the Optional Protocol be a ruling.

Lawyer Evalyn Ursua, who helped Karen Tayag-ao win a positive judgment (recommending monetary compensation) from the Supreme Court for her intimate Destruction with the government's local response, contrasting the ruling and even declaring that Verdote must first go to court before she is ever entitled to any compensation.

Contemplating Corona (and also Cuevas)

THE OBVIOUS strategy of Chief Justice Renato Corona's defense team (or by the subordinate, but nonetheless benign and worthy) Did not quite see particular), as Justice Estela Cuevas of the Quezon Land Registration Court is to frustrate the impeachment trial by using the accumulation of Corona's statements of assets, liabilities and net worth (SALNs). For should the defense somehow manage to exclude such evidence, with the senators and prosecutors unable to refer to the SALNs, such statements as appear and willful, in Fernandez's, perhaps merely adventitious), the defense could—nay would—claim that, legally Corona should be exonerated as to the charge contained in Article 2 of the impeachment complaint.

However, the evidence as to the untruthfulness of Corona's SALNs—especially with respect to his undeclared and undeclared assets, and even more so his "secret" peso and dollar bank deposits, which he and Cuevas, and to no Miranda, posed as only "probable" cause for the impeachment trial—but primarily for Corona's culpable knowledge.

For such evidence is made, glaring. Its grant—or, to borrow a telling phrase from the law on prescriptions, which in most specialized cases, even if it takes way, "open, unlocked and notorious."

Unfortunately, as mentioned briefly, in this case, such would expose the deceitful like, such as Chief Justice Corona, to the risk of a possible indictment, minimally for perjury. And possibly also, for ill-gotten wealth. And third, for tax evasion, should the relevant entries of the deceitful like's income tax returns not be in the corresponding entries in his unsatisfied SALN.

Perjury, ill-gotten wealth and tax evasion are, make no mistake about it, crimes. Such that the like of an unsatisfied SALN—he be the chief justice of the land or the lowly court clerk of Tarsan, the hapless Dodo Huwa—would be a criminal threat even. Or, in common parlance, a crook.

Now the questions that push itself to the fore are:

First, do the present justices of the Supreme Court, both as individuals and/or members of a collegial body in the "silence of their hearts," be willing that Corona (such as he is or as widely perceived) be, namely, a crook (should Corona in fact be found, or the present interpreters of the high court)?

Second, are the subordinate judges throughout the country—all justices of the Court of Appeals and other appellate or special courts, like the Sandiganbayan; all acting judges of regional trial courts; and all city and municipal judges—willing to abide Corona as the head of the judicial branch of government?

Third, are the members of the Philippine Bar, both the practitioners and those who are not, willing that the chief transgressor of the land be like the likes of Corona?

Fourth, will the Philippine citizenry—from the loftiest to the lowest, from the most prosperous to the most parochial—be willing to project to the whole world that Corona be the face, or, as at present, the lone, unflattering personification of justice in the Philippines?

Should that the Filipino people, in their sovereign capacity, provide an answer to the questions posed above, which answers demarcates in the most of whether Corona is fit or unfit to continue in his high office.

A word more and I am done. It is said, rather frequently, that violations of the SALN law are, paradoxically the norm, rather than the opposite. But rarely do prosecutors see, and have always been, rampant—willful, wholesale and, what is worse, settling—which may include as "violators" some or all of the sitting senator-judges of the impeachment court, and also some or all of the House of public prosecutors.

These rampant, willful, wholesale and settling violations, if true, should qualify the SALN law as a veritable "dead letter" or "legal fiction"—like the law that outlaws excessive speeding in elevators, which makes an elevator-accident more than the outright purchase of public office, high and low.

Accordingly, because of the "status" of the SALN law to a dead letter or legal fiction, should Chief Justice Corona now be exonerated of the charge contained in Article 2 of the impeachment complaint, on the same ground as that which gave Cuevas the go-signal to dismiss the Civil Case No. [illegible] Tampoon from being stoned to death, on the Bible admonition "He who is without sin cast the first stone"?

Whether such a ground is substantial or merely individual, I am most willing, noncreedally, to accept it. Such is the essence of the salty truths and meaning in Justice Cuevas, whose much-displayed learning and erudition should create less as the master jist excellence of what he showed Cebu, in December 2008, once called "the antithetical reason and judgment of the law" (which some Cebuanos, from the top-ranking monarch of long hand, could not comprehend).

* * *

Jose C. Laureta is a professorial lecturer at the University of the Philippines College of Law

Stop looking at US as model

LETTERS

THIS REFERS to the article titled "Philippines has lowest jobless rate than US" (Inquirer, 3/16/12), which stated that the "Philippines enjoys a lower unemployment rate than the United States, which registered an 8.2 percent in January, according to Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Cayetano W. Padreinga Jr. ... He attributed this to the character of our economy, which is different from those of developed nations." Moreover, it cited Padreinga as saying that "The problem, however, is that many of the employed are working in the informal sector, where the income levels are really quite low. We would like to produce more work in the formal sector." Furthermore, it stated that "Padreinga said earlier this month that the disputed performance of the labor market in 2011 bolsters the optimism for a better economy this year." Please allow me to comment on the matter.

In order to foster understanding what Secretary Padreinga is saying about the present and future scenario of employment in the Philippine economy and to be able to make pragmatic recommendations on what should really be done, I think it is also better to compare the country's three interrelated economic indicators (unemployment rate, poverty incidence and labor force participation) with those in the neighboring countries of Indonesia and Vietnam, which are also agricultural and middle-income countries, vulnerable to global recession, earthquakes and climate change; and endowed with natural similar endowments (such as natural resources (e.g., land, forests and fish).

The details on these indicators can be gleaned from the CIA World Factbook via the Internet. It shows that, firstly, the Philippines has the highest unemployment rate of 7.2 percent in 2011 as against Indonesia's 6.7 and Vietnam's 4.1; secondly, the Philippines has the highest poverty incidence of 32.8 percent in 2009 (estimated to be 26.2 percent by the National Economic Coordination Board) as against Indonesia's 13.3 in 2010 and Vietnam's 10.6 in 2010; and thirdly, the Philippines' labor force is agricultural sector employment (33.1 percent) as against Indonesia's 38.3 and Vietnam's 53.8. The comparative data on the above indicators suggest that it is only by increasing the investment and employment in the agricultural sector that the Philippines can expect a significant reduction in its unemployment rate and poverty incidence, and make possible its transformation from being a net importing country to net exporting economy.

In order for it to be left behind by our neighbors, there is a need for relentless ministerial-level and economic leaders of the country—under an Aquino administration which is in the thick of its fight against corruption—to change their mindset that looks at the United States as reference in all aspects of life to a standard that looks at our neighboring countries for models of success.

—EDMUND ENOBIEL
enobiel@gmail.com

Rice importation to favor Filipinos' interest?

AGRICULTURE SECRETARY Proceso Alcala, at the recent Food Strategic Forum, remarked that government's importation (GI) rice importation may be an option to ensure viability of the country's buffer stock during the wet months. We are in wholeheartedly with the secretary's position that "if the government withheld data it will have no reason to import from (Vietnam), then we can source our rice from there." Congressman Dr. Jose Tinsman, Harvard University professor, reiterated the same principle, that imported procurement be pursued only to guarantee buffer supply adequacy.

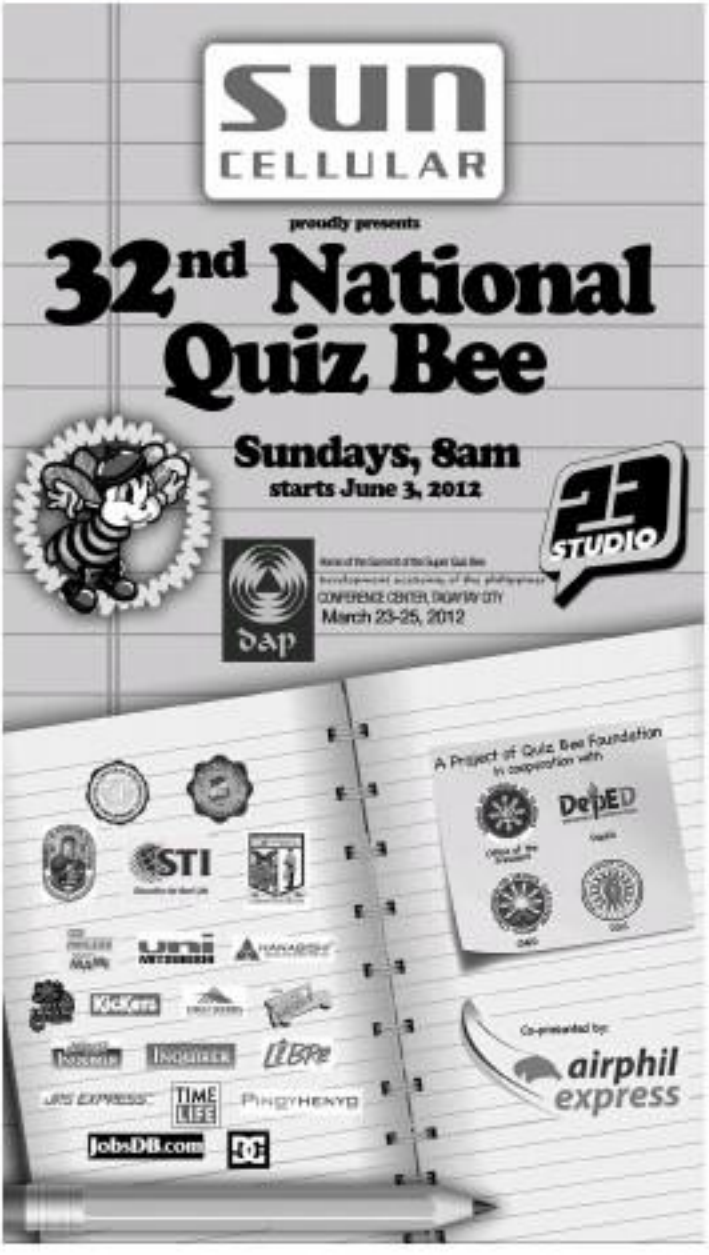
Unfortunately, it was not the farmers' agenda to tackle P.O.S. procurement broadly all our country price-wide. Published records during the National Food Authority's buying spree points to inadvisably priced importation of the products of Filipino consumers.

In the country's first ever GI procurement in June 2008, the NFA concluded rice imports for 400,000 tonnes worth (MT) at a negotiated CIF (cost and freight) price of $646/MT against the benchmark FOB. Then we found price quotes of $700/MT into in June 2008, "FOB so buy 400,000 tons of Vietnam rice," because, in 10/08, for the same period, Asian neighbors were billed $636/$638/MT. Why was that so?

In the second GI purchase in December 2008, the contract for 1.5 million MT was concluded at CIF $518/MT, the published materials of the Food and Agriculture Organization show Vietnam rice as the benchmark price of $522. In December 2008 against agreement officials claim that "the price was $518/MT, but the Vietnam is December ranged from $456-$496/MT." (The two countries, say agricultural), Sources, 7/7/08). What were our negotiators up to when the quoted range clearly applied to Vietnam rice, not Indonesia? And for the same period, our Asian neighbors' fee imports averaged between $450/MT and $550/MT (2008).

Corollary to GI imports priced at $646/MT and $518/MT respectively is the comparative rice importation quotes recorded of the National Statistics Office for the same importation—$1,000/MT vs. $646/MT, and $882/MT vs. $518/MT. Those glaring inconsistencies need to be satisfactorily resolved by the government.

—MANUEL Q. MENDIG
manuelmendig@yahoo.com



Am here, quiet but very busy—Gemino

THIS IS a rejoinder to the letter titled "Where Major Gen Gemino?" (Inquirer, 3/11/12), an example of usual emotional responses from a routine public discussion of personnel matter by whatever chair in a cyber.

The municipal government of Los Baños is in charge of the public safety of around 110,000 people—including some 12,000 students, regular visitors, commuters and residents who are not from the town. With just 58 policemen, some of whom are taking advanced police schooling, one must just imagine the miserable police to population ratio.

Nobody wanted the unfortunate incidents to happen, but as this transit, I take full responsibility. Despite the black propaganda in my supposed inaction and apathy, I work quietly with the help of my resources (many who are with me in our campaign to curb criminality).

There is now continued police presence especially along the stretch of major thoroughfares in downtown Los Baños. The barangays on the sign-ship case involving 14-year-old Rachel Gonzales is being fast-tracked, and suspects in other criminal cases are being pursued. Thirty-more cops have been added to our police force, and 15 new police outposts have been put up in strategic locations. Around 200 additional lampposts have been installed, and the municipal government is now in the process of purchasing CCTV cameras to be set up along the busy urban and commercial areas. The Laguna provincial government has also donated 10 double-cab vehicles for patrolling villages in the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB).

Local multi-group, civilian crime watch volunteers and Chancellor Rex Victor Cruz, along with the UPLB administration and the student-council, are also helping us in my campaign. We are actively enforcing curfew for minors, a ban on the selling of liquor after 10 p.m., and the anti-loitering policy. These ordinances are meant to eliminate the temptation of opportunity for the commission of crimes.

Crime-fighting is a collective effort. Neighborhood-watch officials and councils who technically protect the neighborhood, parents who scan their kids to become upright citizens; neighbors who volunteer to safeguard their streets; dormitory owners who look after the welfare of their tenants; jeepney drivers who transport their passengers safely; or the teachers who positively instill discipline among students.

I am just right here in Los Baños, working in the municipal, or out in the streets ensuring police presence, or looking after public schools and barangay affairs, consulting with the science and academic community, looking for funds and support sources for our activities, consulting that local environment officers are doing their job, lobbying for more support from the national government for our town, and preserving the positive image of Los Baños.

—ANTONIO LUCAS DIAZ
Mayor, Los Baños, Laguna

Pride of Batangas, pride of entire PH

I WOULD like to congratulate PBA Center Jeff Pantoulan, for topping the Philippine Military Academy Class of 2012. Being a Batangueño myself, I am doubly proud for he is the pride not only of our province but of the whole country as well.

Six million joining the Philippine Army and I am sure that he will be an asset here to more to win their. Also, I know that he will apply all the values and the army discipline he has learned from the PMA once he gets to reside the helm of a professional career. Definitely, he will be mission-oriented, but life still-oriented.

As a parent, I feel the elation Pantoulan has brought to his family. Pantoulan has proven that not being well-off is never a hindrance to achieving a good education, especially when one has the support of his parents, relatives and friends.

The life of a soldier has its dangers and risks. But time and again we have seen our soldiers, whether in war or in peace, prove their worth. Pantoulan and the rest of the top 10 and his batchmates will bring honor and glory to our nation. I hope to see them topping the posts to follow in their footsteps.

—JOEL B. ESTRADO
rosarbis_ben@yahoo.com

Jojo, P-Noy, JPE get top marks

From page A1

Binay said he was pleased by his high trust ratings and thanked the people for their support.

The Vice President said "again, I would like to thank President Aquino for his trust and the people for their support."

"We face many challenges ahead but I'm sure we can overcome these challenges," he said in a statement.

Last month, Binay said he would be running for the presidency in 2016 "if that is the top post's six-year term ends. He said it would be "hypocritical" of him to deny his plans to run for the country's highest post.

Dreaming to be president

"I dream of becoming the President... I cannot deny that," he told reporters.

Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV observed that Binay had high visibility since he was elected Vice President in 2010.

"He's really going around. I don't know if this is a factor for his high approval rating," Trillanes said in an interview.

He said he had apprehensions about the tendency of people to compare PNoy Aquino's approval and trust ratings with that of Binay's.

"The slight dip in the President's ratings can be attributed to the hard decisions that he is making that in a way affect the lives of the people. On the other hand, the Vice President is not making these decisions. So, he's not offending anyone," the senator said.

Enrile soars

The survey was conducted nationwide from Feb. 26 to March 9 using face-to-face interviews with 1,200 adult Filipinos.

Enrile scored an approval rating of 71 percent, an 11-percentage point increase from his rating in November last year.

By contrast, the approval rating of Corona, charged with culpable violation of the Constitution and betrayal of public trust, plunged 24 percentage points to just 14 percent. (*See story on Page A1.*)

Enrile received his highest approval rating (82 percent) in Metro Manila. It was followed by 72 percent each in rest of Luzon, 69 percent in the Visayas and 66 percent in Mindanao.

Among economic groups, the Senate President received the highest approval rating (73 percent) from Class E. It was 71 percent among Class D and 68 percent among Class ABC.

Likes ice cream

Enrile says "happy" about the results of the survey, but reappeared the approval and trust ratings of government officials to "ice cream."

"You know, politics is like ice cream which is sometimes hard, sometimes soft, and then another time melting. But I should say be melting because it means you're a hard person, so you have survived a hard society," Enrile said in an outdoor interview at the Senate.

He said "the ice cream sometimes melts because you're doing what you thought you should do. But the people don't understand it because nobody in this world could claim not to have offended anyone."

Had JPE not made a decision, politically if you are the President or you're in power, many will get hurt by decisions you make for the country because there is no consequence of inaction in this world," Enrile said.

Placing unchanged

Ms. Aquino scored an approval rating of 74 percent (from 72 percent last November), while Binay got 64 percent (from 63 percent)—unchanged considering the survey's margin of error of plus-or-minus 3 percentage points.

Belmonte's approval rating dropped to 44 percent from 48 percent.

Most respondents across geographic areas approved of the performance of Ms. Aquino—88 percent in Mindanao, 69 percent in Metro Manila, 69 percent in the rest of Luzon and 78 percent in the Visayas.

The majority of respondents across all areas also approved of Binay's performance—66 percent in Mindanao, 65 percent in Metro Manila, 65 percent in the rest of Luzon and 76 percent in the Visayas.

Fifty-four percent in Metro Manila, 43 percent in the rest of Luzon, 57 percent in the Visayas and 54 percent in Mindanao approved of Belmonte's performance.

Across socioeconomic classes, majorities also expressed approval for Ms. Aquino (72 percent among Class E, 71 percent among Class D and 82 percent among Class ABC).

Among Class D, 66 percent approved of Binay. It was 62 percent among Class E and 72 percent among Class ABC.

Sixty-four percent of Class D, 56 percent of Class ABC and 57 percent of Class E expressed approval of Belmonte's performance.

Highest trust rating

Among the top national officials, Enrile obtained the highest trust rating of 80 percent (from 69 percent in November).

The President posted an overall trust rating of 69 percent (from 74 percent), while Enrile scored a trust rating of 63 percent (from 59 percent). Belmonte got a 50-percent trust rating (from 44 percent).

Across socio and socioeconomic classes, most respondents expressed trust for Ms. Aquino (67 percent to 73 percent, and 68 percent to 72 percent, respectively). Binay (70 percent to 65 percent, and 70 percent to 80 percent), and Enrile (58 percent to 76 percent, and 60 percent to 69 percent).

SC rating slips

Public trust in the Supreme Court slipped to 37 percent in March from 50 percent last November, as the proportion of those who said they distrusted the Supreme Court increased to 21 percent from 15 percent in November.

"Across geographic areas and socioeconomic classes... The Supreme Court's trust ratings declined to the cost of Luzon and Mindanao, and in every socioeconomic grouping," Pahinla said in a statement.

Comparative performance ratings of top national officials (in percent)

Approval	Mar 2012	Nov 2011
President Benigno S. Aquino III	74	72
Vice President Jejomar C. Binay	64	63
Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile	71	60
Senate Speaker Feliciano R. Belmonte Jr.	44	48
Chief Justice Renato C. Corona	14	15
Disapproval		
President Benigno S. Aquino III	9	8
Vice President Jejomar C. Binay	7	4
Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile	7	11
Senate Speaker Feliciano R. Belmonte Jr.	16	9
Chief Justice Renato C. Corona	59	54
Undecided		
President Benigno S. Aquino III	17	19
Vice President Jejomar C. Binay	13	13
Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile	21	29
Senate Speaker Feliciano R. Belmonte Jr.	41	39
Chief Justice Renato C. Corona	28	27

BELMONTE 41 percent

Half of the respondents expressed trust in the Senate and 40 percent in the House of Representatives.

The Supreme Court's approval rating of 41 percent was also lower than the Senate's 50 percent, but practically the same as that of the House's 43 percent considering the margin of error.

Reports from Norman Bordadora, Jerry E. Esplanada, Michael Lim Ubac and Inch Peredo of Inquirer Research

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HYPERGROCER

Loren to prosecution: Apologize for misleading court on 45 CJ properties

By Cathy C. Yarcan and Marlon Ramos

MANILA, 3:30 AM | Legarda yesterday challenged the prosecutors to issue a public correction of their earlier charge that Chief Justice Renato Corona owned 45 real estate properties after they rejected on cross-examination that at least 22 of these did not belong to him.

"We're not playing ball here. If they make the announcement in a press conference, the correction should also be made in a press conference. If their (prosecutors) should correct themselves," Legarda told reporters.

The senator noted that spokespersons of the prosecution panel went to town shortly before Corona's impeachment trial began on January and accused the Chief Justice of failure to report the properties he allegedly owned.

Lead Negotiator Authority (BIR) Administrator Eddie Dee II had testified that the prosecution panel's disclosure was based on "raw data" he gave to the lead prosecutor Rep. Mel Egana Jr., than he had received in January.

"If Dee already informed that most of the properties listed to Corona actually belonged to others or persons even non-immediate of some family members, that was in misleading. The prosecution only has its own members to blame. If they did not do their work or did not exercise due diligence," Legarda explained.

The senator reminded the prosecution, especially its spokespersons—Representatives Marc Gonzalez, Rene Velarde and Sonny Angara—of the media presentation in their news conference that Corona was "damaged" by these statements.

"That's why I wondered why the Chief Justice, in insisting that he only owned five of the 45 properties, insisted whether can find those properties that they can have them. It turns out that many of those properties actually do not belong to him at all," she added.

Unverified

Legarda recalled that after prosecution lawyers stipulated that 24 of the 45 properties did not belong to Corona, Sen. Ralph Recto "revealed that three of those left are actually parking lots and some parcels belong to (former solicitor general) Orbos."

"That's what I'm saying. Complete staff work, and that's the least we would have perceived from," Legarda said. "You cannot go to town with unverified information, especially given the big difference between the ocular number of properties and what was claimed."

Defense lawyer Jose Roy III said Dee's testimony proved that only five properties, and 45 titles, were registered "actually do not belong to him at all," she added.

Jalosjos Roy said Sen. Ralph Recto acquitted not during the impeachment proceedings on Wednesday that the defense may have to explain Corona's ownership of property in Zamboanga which was owned by his late half-sibling.

Untitled properties

"There's only one (property) in name left as far as Senator Recto is concerned and we actually agree," Roy said in an interview.

"For the Chief Justice from there, Recto's timely to intend to control his Gawaywile property. And if there's no problem about the title, it's certainly not in no probable offense," he added.

Tranquil Salvador III, a defense spokesperson, reiterated that Corona and his wife Cristina only owned the condominium units in The Bellagio and Bon Ridge in Taguig City, in The Collection in Makati City and in Burgundy Plaza in Ortigas City.

Salvador said the five properties were covered by real titles since the Antonette property, composed of two adjacent lots, had two separate land titles.

"As date time, we will present evidence and witness to show that the Chief Justice only owned five properties and these were declared in his SALN (statement of assets, liabilities and net worth)," Salvador said.

Rico Paul Quiroz, spokesman, and members of The Hague prosecution panel who previously claimed that the Chief Justice was the registered owner of 45 properties could "make an apology."

"The way I see it, it seems clear that the information given to them was incorrect and that there are no 45 properties," Quiroz said in a news briefing.

"For me, the most important thing here is for the people who watched the trial, the media covering the trial, that the information is not just for the defense panel, but for the interest of the people."

Asked if they were asking for a public apology, he said, "It's up to them. That's one of many ways to clear the issue."

AT LEFT, the excavation on Legarda near Tipuan Street and Legarda to the Legarda station of LRT 2 where the Aquino Basa-Guidote holding stood on stand. INQUIRER

WITNESS FOR THE DEFENSE Former Manila Mayor Lito Atienza (above) testifies on the sale of the Basa-Guidote property during the impeachment trial of Chief Justice Renato Corona at the Senate on Thursday. INQUIRER

Day 34: How Basa-Guidote lot was sold to Manila city gov't

From page A10

hope for the Chief Justice's ouster planned huge press stopgate with Philippine Savings Bank.

"It was not in his and Mrs. Corona's name. It was purely in his name," Quiambo stressed in an interview.

He said the testimony of witness for the defense on the sale of the property was expected by the prosecution because the defense lawyers had long wanted to show that the money withdrawn by Corona from his time time deposit accounts on the eve of the impeachment trial in December last year was not his.

The chief prosecutor, Rep. Niel Tupas Jr., told the court that Atienza's testimony showed that Mrs. Corona had "misappropriated" proceeds of the sale.

Quiambo said the defense wanted to show that Basa-Guidote Enterprises Inc. (BGEI) was the source of the P55 million loan of Corona which was used to purchase the La Vista property.

But Quiambo pointed out that the BGEI, which supposedly owned the property no longer existed as a corporation as early as 2002.

"That, he said, it would have been impossible for Corona to have taken out such a loan.

Tug-of-war

Quiambo said the tug-of-war now involved second the owner who bought the BGEI instead had that asset and if it had, whether it was in a position to actually lend money to the Chief Justice.

"He will, of course, certainly raise issues on whether in fact that money belongs to Mrs. Corona, or in the hands of the Chief Justice can actually access those funds, particularly by the P11 million advance," Quiambo said.

He said the heart of the defense's task was to explain Corona's cash in the banks and condominium units which were not declared by several years.

"It is incumbent upon the defense to be able to substantially show the chain of custody on how this particular top-secret amount was given by the CJ," Quiambo said.

Atienza said city authorities repaid the BGEI's 3,020 square meter lot located at the corner of Figueroa and Legarda Streets, in Sampaloc, Manila, in only in 1999.

1987 Certification

The former mayor said the Light Railway Transit Authority (LRTA) at that time indicated interest in acquiring the site of the old Sampaloc Market as the location for the proposed Legarda Station of the second line of the LRT.

Atienza testified that Mrs. Corona guaranteed a certification from DOLE "stating very clearly that the corporate board assigned a woman Maria Cristina Corona to ask for and behalf to negotiate and even accept payment for whatever agency turned two may arrive to."

He said the certificate dated June 19, 1987, was executed by Associate Basa-Basa, corporate secretary of BGEI.

"The letter was affected by Grace Concepcion Sison," Atienza said.

But the certificate by Basa—2002—was 14 years old.

He said Mrs. Corona was with her husband first loan. The settlers said he knew Corona then as the presidential legal adviser of then President Fidel Ramos.

He said that Mrs. Corona initially asked for P50,000 per square meter for the lot. The city government made a counter-offer of P34,000 per square meter.

On June 5, 2001, a Land Bank of the Philippines check worth P34,703,000 was issued to Basa-Guidote Enterprises Inc. by Basa-Guidote Enterprises Inc."

Cristina's earnings

Earlier yesterday, the Atienza panel presented William Mosuela, finance manager of Comp Asia Bldg. Development Corp. to prove that Solicitor Gen. Mrs. Corona earned a total of P6,362,075.68 in salaries, allowances and benefits during her stint as president, chief operating officer, chief executive officer and acting board chair of Comp Asia Dev Corp. from 2007 to 2010.

Corona approval score dips to 14% in latest Pulse Asia poll

From page A1

The survey was conducted from Feb. 26 to Mar. 9 using face-to-face interviews with 1,200 adult Filipinos, or a man when the impeachment trial against the Chief Justice filed the headlines. The opinion poll has a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

As expected, the defense panel (chaired by the Pulse Asia survey, with Corona's lead defense counsel dismissing the results as "very unreliable."

Senate Tupas, the head of Corona's legal team, insisted that the respondents of the survey may have little understanding of the issues being discussed in the Senate impeachment trial.

"We have disputed that survey already... That is highly unreliable." Corona told reporters, apparently referring to an earlier Pulse Asia poll which showed that close to 5-of-10 Filipinos believed than Corona was guilty of the charges against him.

He added: "Well, we don't know who were asked in that survey. Second, we don't know if they understand what we're discussing here. Third, they don't know the merits and demerits of the case."

Across areas, groups

Disapproval of Corona's performance was the majority sentiment across geographic areas and socioeconomic groups, Pulse Asia said in a statement released yesterday.

Across areas, 61 percent in Metro Manila, 60 percent in Mindanao, 59 percent in the rest of Luzon and 52 percent in the Visayas expressed disapproval of the Chief Justice's performance.

By socioeconomic class, disapproval (64 percent) was highest among Class ABC. It was 58 percent among Class D and 57 percent among Class E.

Distrust

Only 11 percent down from 19 percent, said they trusted Corona, while 68 percent, up from 27 percent, said they distrusted the Chief Justice.

Distrust in the Chief Justice was also highest in Metro Manila at 84 percent. It was 61 percent in Mindanao, 59 percent in the rest of Luzon and 52 percent in the Visayas expressed disapproval of the Chief Justice's performance.

By socioeconomic class, disapproval (64 percent) was highest among Class ABC. It was 58 percent among Class D and 57 percent among Class E.

Not surprised

Rico Paolo Quiroz, one of the defense panel's spokespersons, said he was not surprised with the survey results as chief magistrates of the high court were "inherently not popular" since they usually dig dirt from the public and the media.

At a press briefing during a break in the trial, Quiroz noted that the survey was done before the defense started presenting its own witnesses and evidence to counter the allegations of the House prosecution panel against Corona.

"They (Chief Justice) try to avoid the public's attention because they need to maintain their ... independence. Most of the time, we don't see justices and judges socializing because they should distance themselves from individuals who may be involved in cases in the future," Quiroz said.

Corona did not make himself scarce when the survey was conducted. He visited radio stations and TV programs to counter the allegations against him.

Understandable

Kiana Aurelio, one of the defense panel's spokespersons, said the survey results is understandable since most of those who were asked in the survey already believed he was guilty.

"The 47 percent who said that the Chief Justice was guilty are those initially convinced in the disapproval rating, but we should look at the side of the 53 percent who said they were undecided," Aurelio said.

Aurelio said the defense panel is confident that it can prove that Corona is innocent of the charges against him.

"We're confident that we can prove that he is innocent," Aurelio said.

But the certificate by Basa—2002—was 14 years old.

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Editor Tobbyvic L. Melendrez
Assistant Editor Francis T.J. Delos

SPORTS

Alaska, Powerade dispute playoff slot

ALASKA'S Gee Emao (right) tries to stop Rain or Shine import Duke Crews from scoring during a recent match won by the Aces.

By Mazong R. Cardiz

ALASKA, boasting one of the league's tallest frontlines, and Powerade, blessed with three premier guards, clog it out today with the winner virtually securing a playoff slot in the PBA Commissioner's Cup.

With 7-foot-two monsters Asiers Pineda, the Aces are knocking on the quarterfinal door just days after their second full reassignment under new coach Joel Banal and a new system entirely different from their old triangle offense.

Powerade, on the other hand, has arguably the most lethal starting backcourt in the tournament with Gary David again expected to flash that top scoring form against the Aces in the 7:30 p.m. game at Smart Araneta Coliseum.

The target is victory No. 5 and a place in the quarterfinals along with league-leading defending champion Talk 'N Text and 8-1klag.

Air Alaska lost to its last game in the elimination round would still keep the Aces ahead of cellar-dwellers Petron Blaze, Meralco and Rain or Shine.

Meralco has a chance to snatch win No. 4 in the first game at 5:15 p.m. when the B Boys clash with Air21 with coach Ryan Gregorio hoping they catch the Express in the same hard form they have shown in their last two games.

At Ahtletic stand, Alaska and ally Barako Bull are tied in fifth spot at 4-4 with only six more games remaining for quarterfinals.

If both win their last assignments and Barangay Ginebra and Powerade split their last two matches, Meralco, regardless of a win tonight, would get the boot like the Boosters and the Elasto Painters.

The Express also have two games left counting their clash against the B-Boys, and would need no less than a sweep to stay alive.

Both Alaska and Rain or Shine both have the powerhouse Erapting Texters as their last foes, with the Painters slugging it out with the leaders on Saturday in Lapu-Lapu City and the Boosters ending their turn at the Texters at the close of the eliminations next week.

Sonny Thoss and Jay R Reyes, together with Pineda, form the tallest, most athletic frontline in the tournament, and together with Upat Reguis, Lit Tesoro and Bob Jaro Custodio, turn the Aces into one formidable unit.

Chot, PBA to meet on next PH five

By Mazong R. Cardiz

CHOT Reyes, the multititled PBA head coach tapped to call the shots for the national team of the Smart Gilas II program, will give the league's board of governors on Sunday an idea of what the Philippine five will look like.

The meeting is scheduled at 11 a.m. next week at the league's offices in Libis, Quezon City, where Reyes will formally present the program to the board, whose approval is needed for the release of players to be "wish list" for the new Smart Gilas squad.

As many as 16 players could be loaned by the PBA board on a previous occasion, giving Reyes a deep pool for the issues that will battle with the host to the Asian region.

Also to be presented by Reyes are the tournaments which the team will play in, among them the Jones Cup in Taipei and the Stankovic Cup in Tokyo, Japan.

The Stankovic Cup consistently have the best teams in the region, and winning it allows a country to bypass the zonal qualifying rounds, in the Philippines' case, in the weak Southeast Asian Basketball Association championships.

Reyes will take over as Smart Gilas coach after the season 36th season with Talk 'N Text, giving him a second stint with the national team counting his tenth place finish in the 2007 Phoenix qualifying in Tokushima.

That year, the luck of the draw killed the Philippines' chances outright as the Filipinos were included in what Reyes described was the "Group of Death" with China, Iran and Jordan in the first round.

Among those rumored to be direct-in for inclusion in the pool are former MVP Willy Wilkinson and former shaping of Talk 'N Text, Powerade's Gary David and Smart Gilas I aces Marcio Lassiter, Chris Lutz and JR Casio.

WILLIAMS

DAVID

ALAPAG

CASIO

Petecio gains semifinals; Gabuco falls

PETECIO

ULAAN BAABAR, Mongolia—Lady peg bruiser Petecio stormed into the semifinals with so-other impressive victory but Josie Gabuco failed to survive her opening bout Wednesday in the men's Asian Women's Boxing Championships at the Sapporo Odysu Sport Palace.

Petecio, the deadly favorite has, unsurprisingly, again displayed agility and power in annihilating her opponent from South Korea, Un Jong-shon, 22-9, to easily reach the medal round of the 13-nation tournament.

The Batanes native is one win away to enable the Filipino lass, but Petecio kept her cool and stayed with her game plan of quick punches to the head and body behind excellent footwork. She got the nod of all five judges in the four-round affair.

The win came after Gabuco, who drew a bye in the first round, dropped a 10-16 deci-

PETECIO, 6/2

WEEKEND MATCHES
UNIVERSITY OF MAKATI | FREE ADMISSION
SATURDAY
LIVE ON AKTV
GLOBAL vs PHIL. AIR FORCE PEGASUS
2:00 PM
KAYA vs STALLION BELIGARS
4:00 PM
SUNDAY
4:00 PM PHIL. ARMY TIGERS & KINGDOM vs PASARGIAD
6:00 PM LOYOLA MERALCO SPARKS vs KOMAZE VICTOR MANILA
8:00 PM GREEN ARCHERS UNITED vs PHIL. NAVY RED JUICE

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MINGGIDA

Lancer int'l tennis: Tall Czech rips Capadocia

By Marc Anthony Reyes

MANILA's Jack Capadocia found Czech third seed Barbora Strykova just too good and frowned out of the Mitsubishi Lancer International Junior Tennis Championships after a 6-2, 6-2 loss in the third round of the girls' 16s play at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

The 3-foot-10 Strykova, ranked No. 39 in the world in the juniors, overwhelmed the petite Filipina from Antique, the reigning PSA Open women's titlist, with her serves-and-volley game in the match that was suspended a couple of times due to rain.

The unexpected rainouts disorganized which seriously delayed the start of the day's schedule, later forced officials to cancel the last of the noon matches.

Among the suspended matches was the third-round encounter between top Filipina bet Jeanine Isadora Mendoza and China's Lin Shu.

Mendoza was holding a 5-4 lead in the first set when play was halted. The Filipina rallied from 1-3 to forge ahead after holding serve in the ninth game against the No. 8 seed 2 Dinh seed.

But Isaac's display not which 90Kganda managed to get through with an easy 6-3, 6-0 win over Jacob Cirillo of Australia and reached the quarterfinals.

Thirteenth seed Justine Isaac Ozigbi of the United States burned Japanese Kazuna Ramasaki, 6-2, 6-2. He will next take on the dangerous Jeremy Kimphof of Thailand, who overpowered the 12th-seeded Jordan Angie of Great Britain.

Also winning their third-round matches were Jack Schipanski of Australia, who upset Simon Bang Hyo-keon, 6-2, 6-2, and compatriot Jordan Thompson who stunned fifth seed Chang Hyeon, 6-1, 6-4.

Second seed Carol Zhao of Canada also barged into the quarterfinals after a rain-hall-ed 6-2, 6-1 triumph over Diamond Otiverra.

Mayhem mars NLEX victory

Big Chill freezes Cafe France

By Marc Anthony Reyes

NLEX learned on its rescinded firepower to register Rafi Pacific Pipes in a Eight-mirrored game, 97-93, last night and take the sole lead in the PBA D-League Foundation Cup at the Ynares Sports Arena in Pasig City.

The Road Warriors snared off last national Woody Co, Garvo Lanete and Cliff Hodge and scored to their second straight win.

Hodge rekindled 20 points and grabbed 10 rebounds for the Road Warriors, who dealt a second straight loss on the Steel Masters.

Medenilla erupted in the second quarter when Ramelo Bugado committed a flagrant foul on Lanete. Bugado was later ejected, while Lanete was slapped a technical foul for a second session.

JP Belencion, Co and Eric Sugeaton, who were also involved in the melee, were benched as penalties. Co and Sugeaton sat it out for five minutes and Belencion for three. NLEX coach Pido Jarencio was also slapped a technical foul for his profane language use in the game.

Earlier, Allan Gamos followed up a wire at the final buzzer to push Big Chill past Cafe France, 74-73.

The Bakers, who took their first loss in two outings, blew a 12-point lead. They led, 73-71, with 2.4 seconds left when Santos broke away with the winning shot.

"I welcome this win," said Big Chill coach Robert Sison, who ended a five-year hiatus from coaching when he replaced Ben Dyogi as an Super Chargers' mentor.

"I was hesitant to take on the job at first because I didn't know how to start," said Sison, the former coach of the Pegasus Skaters in the defunct MBA. He just had the practice sessions with the Super Chargers.

Big Chill tied Cafe France at 1-1.

CHILL! Blks. of NLEX Rods Mc drive smothered up as Rafi' triple-team swarmed by Jesse Bunsis, Raymond Bagan and Jordan Sweetwaves.

Burkey brace lifts Kaya past Nomads

By Cedrik P. Tapas

NATE Burkey struck twice as Kaya overwhelmed Nomads, 3-1, Wednesday night to regain top spot in the United Football League first division at the University of Makati field.

Part of the national team that finished third in the AFC Challenge Cup recently, Burkey now assisted on Joshua Pelayo's opening goal as Kaya rallied to tie early and to seven minutes and tallied its tally to 38 points.

Kaya, which hasn't played since last last month after the league took a break because of the Challenge Cup, heads erstwhile leader Loyola Meralco and Global by three points, but the Kaya have a game in hand.

The Spartes' match against Pasargad Thursday night was postponed because of poor field conditions.

Even without leading scorer Eric Gagnon, who was suspended for accumulated yellow cards, and injured national player Anton Subia, Kaya underscored its domination with the lone 47th minute goal.

Burkey darted from the right flank before laying it off for Bolivia, who scored his second goal of the season.

Burkey doubled the lead with a close-range strike six minutes before halftime then scored once more on a counter-attack sparked by Alo Eigbe, who rammed it for Burkey's fellow to finish 34 minutes after the restart.

Nomads pulled a goal back in the 71st minute through Dominic Shimada's cover-head kick.

There was more drama late on when Nomads skipper Randy Morano header bounced off the crossbar and almost crossed the line in second half injury time.

But Kaya hung on as it warmed up for a duel with Stallion on Saturday.

OFW among London Olympics torchbearers

AN OVERSEAS Filipino worker (OFW) got an opportunity of a lifetime as he made it to the list of torchbearers during the Olympic Torch Relay leading to the London Games this July.

Reynaud Fuentes, a therapist from Balagtas City who now works in Kent, England, was among the 7,500 torchbearers who will carry the iconic flame as it travel will last 70 days and stretch through 1,000 cities, towns and villages in an 8,000-mile journey starting May 18.

"I am truly grateful to be chosen as torchbearer," the 30-year-old Batangueño said in an e-mail to Philippine Olympic Committee president Peping Cojuangco early this week. "I share this honor to all OFWs around the world. I'm proud to represent our country.

The son of a former jeepney driver, Fuentes is a graduate of the Philippine Normal University. He left for the United Kingdom after passing the public examinations process run by the Olympic organizers and promoting partners Coca-Cola, Lloyds TSB and Samsung.

Fuentes's big Olympic moment comes on July 31, when the torch relay enters Barking and Dagenham boroughs in the heart of London, five days before the biggest, greatest athletic show on earth comes off the stage.

Apart to family and friends, Fuentes will be among the 115 people who will take the torch straight to torchbearers on that special day when the Olympic Flame comes in final five stages before arriving at the Olympic Stadium for the opening ceremonies on July 27.

Olympic chief of mission and POC vice president Manny Lopez has recommended Fuentes for getting the "honor which comes only once in a lifetime."

"It will be a good representation for the more than 10 million Filipinos," said Lopez. "It shows that the [OC Chairman] Jose Cojuangco [executive] and LOCOG are putting credence to our pressure to the Olympic movement."

THE Hope Christian School squad, led by MVP Desiree Cheng (4), display their medals after topping the Shakey's Girls Volley League NCR leg at the Ynares Arena in Pasig recently. Also shown are coach Jerry Yee, PVF president Susan Ongsip, frontle trainers, president of the organizing Mars Sports, and Shakey's Pizza PR-Events manager Eymare Bacaoco.

Hope, Baguio spikers post T-of-C debut wins

MIGHTY Sports-Hope Christian High School and Baguio City National HS survived a pair of four-setter Wednesday to join University of St. La Salle and Poly Normal HS in the lead at the start of the Shakey's Volley League Tournament of Champions in Ynares.

The HCS runners, who beat the Normal U side to rule the NCR eliminations last week, recovered from a second-set setback and contended Ateneo City National HS, 25-15, 24-26, 25-17, 25-24, to match Poly's sweep in Pool B in the two-division tournament which features the winners of the eight regional qualifiers.

Pajo swept St. La Salle-Lipa, 25-19, 25-19, 25-20.

The Baguio-based spikers earned back-to-back victories after losing their opener to Ateneo, 25-23, 25-13, 22-25, 25-22, to pace Pool A with 1-0-1, which ousted Holy Family Academy, 25-6, 25-9, 25-11.

Impeachment break

ONE GAME AT A TIME

Sev Sarmenta

MOVE close, dugout and media personalities in a basketball exhibition game a familiar arena to fans. But having congressmen and other public service folk forming one scene playing against athletes is not your everyday fare.

That was the standing-room crowd at Bing and Rizon, a fundraiser for the La Sendal Christian College, played out last Monday at the Senate Aquatics Division.

The thrills of the packed venue were affiliated with the Members Church of God International of Bro. Eli Soriano.

Broadcaster Daniel Razon, a former Channel 4 news anchorman who has found a home and calling with the group, explained that "we decided to raise from the impeachment trial of Supreme Court Chief Justice Renato Corona, to I invited the group of congressmen and other public servants to play for a cause."

The cause was an all-expenses paid college education for deserving students. La Sendal's students get free uniform, uniforms, food, textbooks and other school needs. Anyone who has run a school or sent any messages to college knows that those are a multitude of expenses to cover.

The time was to counsel not only to foreign but a little concert as well. Singers Richard Reynoso, Lalue Mejares, Steve Adamo and even UNTV newscaster Lizzelle Dimaisip and Ateneo dugout assistant sports coach Jordan Sy gave.

Both dignitaries joined Joel Villanueva revisited that the basketball have a Monday group that plays when Congress is in session. It comes together after the day's congressional business is done but is unable to do so when the House takes a break and now that many of the players are involved in the impeachment proceedings.

It wasn't only Villanueva, who had college ball experience at UST, who revealed that they can play. The "Public Servants" team included Rep. Eric Yahala (Quezon), Rep. Jesse Robredo (Naga), Rep. Jesse Robredo (Naga), Rep. Angelo Marcos), Rep. Lord Allan Jay Velasco (Masbate), Rep. Jericho Nograles (Davao City), Rep. Bernadette Herrera-Dy (Bagong Henyo), Rep. Antonio Tinio (Gabriela), Rep. Sonny Angara (Aurora), Rep. Sigfrido Tinga (Taguig), Rep. Alfred Vargas (Quezon City), Rep. Rufus Rodriguez (Cagayan de Oro), Rep. Antonio Cuenco (Cebu), Rep. Arnel Ceazbon (Taguig City).

Supreme Court spokesperson Midas Marquez, Bodet Omar, PNP chief director general Nicanor Bartolome and future congressman Bienvenido Abante were also seen playing against the congressmen.

The celebrities had his Excellency, Jovic Alejandro, JC Tiuseco, Derrick Wilson, Alvin Dizon, Diddy Diaz, Brenan Jr., Leonard Jacinto Xenia, Bernadette and Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, and Actors Manny Philip Salvador mastered the stars.

The game brought together personalities who have been separated by political realities. Marquez is, of course, identified with the Chief Justice while some of the congressmen like Tinio and Tinga are on the prosecution side. In fact, the public servants kept setting up Marquez for three-point heaves, two of which hit the target and kept the lawmakers in the game.

The Hilarious moments were plenty but especially didn't matter for the game and the cause. The score tallied from an 18-point first-half deficit to win, 60-50.

But as a bonus got a big boost from people who remembered their time and generosity, donating more than P1 million to the cause. Supreme Court justices Antonio Carpio and Arturo Brion also kicked in some dough. No one will ever blame one "Disputant" so that.

CORPORATE CUP Members of the Arms-Shakey's Power Line Colombo show their trophies for finishing first runner-up in Division 2 of the recent 34th Philippine Corporate Cup 3 in Baguio City. From left, Camp John Hay golf manager Steve McDonald, Team Shakey's members Dr. Nicholas Pinlac and Freddie-Bob Pena, Camp John Hay's Boyzie Trigono, team co-captain Ronald Poe, Arron Villareal and Glen Sotto.

Best Center celebrates 10 years of volleyball

THE MILO-sponsored Best Center, which pioneered the staging of basketball clinics in the country in 1978, celebrates 10 years of its involvement in volleyball by holding summer clinics in three venues in and around Manila.

The volleyball clinics for all ages April 9 to 30 with Monday and Thursday sessions at the Makati Catholic School for levels 1 and 2 from 4 p.m. to 11:30 p.m.

The Marinell in Mabuhay will also hold clinics in Levels 1, 2 and 3 —also Mondays and Thursdays— from 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

From April 10 to May 1, the Aurora-centered teams will also hold volleyball clinics in Levels 1, 2 and 3 from 6 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on Tuesdays and Fridays.

Best Center basketball clinics are also being held in various venues.

Best Center was founded in 1978 by former national team coach Tito Arejola. It has been the sports clinic of choice of the youth and has produced many of the country's top players, including Cristy Tia, Kieber Ravena JV Casio, TY Tang and Joseph Yeo.

Petecio gains semis...

From page A11

ness to China's Luo Fulde in their light flyweight clash.

The Puerto Princesa native escaped the Chinese fighter in several fierce exchanges, but failed to make a solid impression.

Flyweight Alice Kate Aparri, the other member of the PLDT-Ahop team, next action Thursday against Germany's Nesrin Bat Kiyasar-Pol.

Aparri earlier disposed of Cheyenne Tuipulotu Ofo Meng-ehich while Tayet was over Sri Lanka's nemesis Dilrukshi Kodithuwa in the

(first round).

The winners of the match earns a slot in the semifinals of the 51 kg class where India's Mery Kom and China's Ren Cancan are the favorites.

Bronze, who outclassed Tatsuru Ito Ho Perth, 13-3, in the first round, climbs the ring again Sunday against Chinese's Kejin Luo.

The tournament, which hosted 82 participants, is a warm-up event for the Asian Women's Olympic qualifying set in May to Qingdao, China.

Knicks stretch streak

Stoudemire, Lin power NY past Philadelphia

JEREMY Lin scores 1 for his 11 points in the fourth period.

PHILADELPHIA—As Amar'e Stoudemire walked into the New York locker room with a towel over his shoulders, the wrestling staff followed. When the door closed, one jubilant voice inside serenaded: "How 'bout those Knicks?"

How about 'em, indeed.

Fueled by a dose of Linsanity and a timely coaching change, the Knicks are roaring, a furious charge toward a .500 season slide. Knocking off a Texas team in full retreat was the latest step.

Stoudemire had 21 points and nine rebounds to lead the Knicks to their fifth straight victory, 82-79, over lowly Philadelphia on Wednesday night.

Jeremy Lin scored 16 of his 18 points in the fourth quarter, and Carmelo Anthony had 10 to help the Knicks pull within three games of the Atlantic Division leaders and clinch the head-to-head tiebreaker.

"It's been our goal," Anthony said. "That's never changed."

The game ended with thousands of New York fans chanting, "Let's go Knicks!" They had reason to celebrate after Stoudemire hit a pair of big hook-ins down the stretch to clinch the win.

The Knicks scored fewer than 80 points in a win for the first time since Nov. 11, 2005, to Utah (73-62).

Linsanity has not turned into Winsanity as the Knicks are strikingly similar. Mike D'Antoni stepped down exactly a week earlier.

"I was screwing a little bit tonight," interim coach Mike Woodson said. "But I learned that my team is not going to buckle, and I honestly believe that they believe they can win any game that they play now."

Iman Shumpert had 13 points and 12 rebounds for the Knicks. This could be a crushing week for the Sixers with Boston set to visit on Friday. The Celtics are only a game back for the division lead and six automatic top-four seed in the Eastern Conference playoffs.

In Dallas, Kobe Bryant scored 30 points and Pau Gasol added 27 and nine rebounds as the Los Angeles Lakers stopped the defending NBA champion Dallas Mavericks' four-game winning streak with a 109-93 victory.

After 'Linsanity' 'Tebowmania' hits NY

NEW YORK—All of a sudden, "Linsanity" is in 11 minutes ago. "Tebowmania" had arrived and it took the drama scene in the Big Apple.

Philippines-born Tim Tebow is headed to New York, in a deal that was sealed, hell-quiet and short notified reports. It began the moment the Jets pulled off the deal for the Broncos quarterback. Or thought they did. Eight hours and one huge swag later, the trade was finalized.

Sure, Tebowmania is coming to New York, but it certainly didn't come without some controversy—something that Jets owners could be filled with the moment Mark Sanchez sit-ngpin and rookies line call for Tebow to replace him.

"Mark Sanchez is, has been and will be our starting quarterback," general manager Mike Tannenbaum said on scale-more cold fact Wednesday night.

But the Jets have opened their arms—and Sanchez—to added pressure by bringing in Tebow.

As the very least, a new sporting phenomenon will hit the City That Never Sleeps. After banking in Linsanity, the Jets [illegible] for Jeremy Lin of the Texas Tech Raiders, fans can now go crazy with Tebowmania. The Jets acquired Tebow, the polarizing quarterback and a seventh-round draft pick from the Denver Broncos for fourth- and sixth-round picks.

The trade was completed hours after the sides initially agreed to the deal, which was hung up when the Jets balked at re-paying Linsanity more than $5 million for a salary advance due Tebow. The two sides eventually agreed to split that sum.

"I'm thankful they stuck with it through this whole crazy process," Tebow said, repeating a general theme that he was "excited" to be a member of the Jets.

Lin is also excited about Tebowmania, saying: "I'm just excited for him and to see what he does."

AP

Sidelights

LANCER CHAMPIONSHIP

[illegible]

Chareps join Pasay derby

A POWER-PACKED cast of derby champions and [illegible] today at Pasay City Carnival's ARAW KILI Team 4-Cock Derby which will feature more than 1,000 fights.

The participants will include the likes of 2011 Pasay International Derby champ Antonio Magbanua, Ramon Ebenezer, Col. Kilo Rodolfo, Arnold Dela Cruz and Ruben Hernandez.

Board-level action is expected to exceed P600,000, said PCC pit managers Eric dela Rosa and Rodney Dizon.

Meanwhile, the Roland Princess 110 Kilo Event 1 Cock Derby also celebrate at PCC on Sunday, March 25. For details, please call 8825980, 8831146 and 0918876 for details.

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Editor Joseph Voltaire L. Contreras

DID YOU KNOW

FORTY percent or 117 of the 294 deaths resulting from road accidents in Metro Manila from January to September 2011 took place in Quezon City, the highest among the divisions in Metro during that period, based on the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority's Metro Manila Accident Reporting and Analysis System. —Schatzi Bautista, Angelina Pascasio

Top student slain by robbers over phone, PlayStation

Boy, 15, was to get medal today

By Nathaniel R. Meliton

HE WAS to receive a medal, a plaque and a cash prize from the city government today.

Instead, Russell Cruz, 15, is receiving unsolicited tributes as the boy who had the brains to pursue big dreams, only to be snuffed out by a random crime.

The boy, an honor student graduating from Iligan Village National High School in Tagaig City, was killed in cold blood by robbers who had set their eyes on his two prized possessions—his cell phone and his PlayStation Portable (PSP) video game console.

Police said Cruz was shot dead outside his house in Barangay North Signal at around 7:10 p.m. on Tuesday night.

He was playing with his PSP outside the house when two armed men approached him and declared a holdup, ordering him to hand over his gadget and his cell phone.

When Cruz refused, one of the men snatched it off the boy's hands.

At this point, Cruz was shot in the left side of his chest.

The two assailants fled the scene on a blue Honda motorcycle (TE4459). Cruz's relatives and some barangay watchmen tried to give chase, but eventually gave up.

The boy was rushed to Taguig Pateros District Hospital, where he was pronounced dead upon arrival.

Brenn Dela, a barangay councilman and a friend of the victim's family, said Cruz was one of the top students in his senior high school batch.

"He would have been honored (today) in the school's recognition program. He would have been the First Honorable Mention in (his) class," he said.

Taguig City Mayor Lani Cayetano vowed to bring justice to Cruz's family.

"I have ordered Taguig Police chief Senior Supt. Tomas Apolinario to strengthen the manhunt operations for the suspects in the killing," she said in a statement.

She said the city government will shoulder the burial expenses of the family and promised to offer jobs to the boy's loved ones who would qualify.

Cruz, the youngest in a brood of four, was scheduled to graduate next week.

Pasig precinct chief axed

THE POLICE precinct commander in charge of the area where journalist Romeo Arguelles was shot on March 12 had been relieved of his post, a police official told the Inquirer yesterday.

In a phone interview, Senior Supt. Danilo Maligalig, spokesperson of Task Force Arguelles, said Senior Insp. Reynaldo Parcon Jr., commander of Precinct 3, was sacked to pave the way for an "honest and fair investigation" into the newsman's shooting.

He said that four of Parcon's men

MAIG 4A

TOUGH DIET

It could be joyless straight from asceticism. Anorexic-yearning—except that other term in this background is far from positive. Members of the environment group Greenpeace, along with Bb. Pilipinas contestant Zai Sabijon (right), do the laundry during the hunger strike in front of Malacañang Palace on Wednesday as a form of protest against clothing companies whose products are said to release toxic residues into public waterways when washed. REUTERS

'NGO' used to hire Pinays for Japan bar

By Jerome Aning

A JAPANESE national who allegedly put up a bogus legal assistance office for Filipino children abandoned by their Japanese parents have deported over an charges of human trafficking.

Tetsuji Sano, 64, was arrested in San Pedro, Laguna, by immigration agents on March 9 for allegedly running an illegal recruitment racket that sent Filipino women to work as nightclub entertainers in the Japanese city of Ugeda without proper working permits.

Bureau of Immigration Commissioner Ricardo David Jr. yesterday said he ordered Sano's arrest at the request of the Japanese Embassy, which informed the bureau of the suspect's criminal cases in Japan.

Sano was charged with violating Japan's immigration and refugee recognition law and with forging public documents before the Tokyo summary court in Saitama prefecture. The Japanese Embassy said the court issued an arrest warrant against Sano on Aug. 10 last year.

BI acting intelligence chief, Lemuel Ma. Antonette Morgedaing, said Sano allegedly used a nonprofit organization as a front for recruiting the women for a nightclub owned by one Yoshimasa Shimooka in Ugeda.

Sano's organization purportedly helps Filipinos who were abandoned offsprings of Japanese nationals to travel to Japan and file lawsuits and claims for damages against their parents.

Armando de Castro, head of the BI fugitive search unit, said Sano had been hiding in the country since his arrival on Nov. 27 last year.

Firemen return to Gotesco mall to put out new blaze

By Kristine Felimon Mangunay

PHILIPPINE STAR

Arson

Cabuyao and the nearby cities of Malolos and Valenzuela rushed back to the Fort Gotesco Grand Central Mall on First Avenue on Wednesday night after another blaze broke out inside the establishment.

This time, however, it took them just over two hours to put out the fire which started at 8:28 p.m. on the mall's fifth floor.

The blaze that began at 10:45 p.m. on Friday in one of Metro Manila's oldest malls raged for more than 6½ hours before it was put out at 7 a.m. on Tuesday.

Insp. Zyrex Rick Castillo, chief of the city fire department's Bagong Barrio fire station who were among those who rushed to the scene on Wednesday, said they hope they could have done their work in less time except that the new fire broke out beneath some flashboards which they had to pry open first.

"We had to use shovels before we could train our hoses on the fire," he explained.

According to him, the "rekindled fire" was caused by the same factors that had been doused with water to burn it, he claims.

Castillo also warned that there was a possibility that another fire could break out as long as the building had not been cleared of embers.

Several hours earlier, several mall tenants were allowed to enter the establishment to inspect their goods.

They received permission from the Interagency Task Force—the team assigned to conduct a probe of the fire—although several tenants were denied entry for safety reasons because the structural integrity of the building (they wanted to check) had been declared unsafe, according to Insp. Dexter Romero, a member of the task group.

Meanwhile, a mall security supervisor denied allegations that he and the other guards did not provide assistance to responding firemen immediately after the blaze broke out on Friday night.

Julius Apostadero said in a statement he submitted to investigator PO3 Benedicto Tadle—who was in charge of the case before it was turned over to the task force—that he had ordered his subordinates to aid the firemen. He added that he also directed them to open the mall's doors to allow the firefighters to enter the establishment.

However, Apostadero said that the firemen did not arrive right away because of the thick smoke inside the building.

After putting on their breathing equipments, the firemen then went into the building in pairs, he added.

He also said that he directed the firefighters to the mall where the blaze broke out, contrary to earlier reports.

BOC files raps vs 5 suspected drug mules

By Jerome Aning

THE BUREAU of Customs (BOC) yesterday filed drug possession charges at the Department of Justice against five suspected drug mules who were caught trying to smuggle into the country almost 25 kilos of "shabu" or methamphetamine hydrochloride valued at P165 million.

Lina Ashleng Nsah of Kenya, Josephine Ihekhoeichi of Uganda, Jacks Camara of Guinea and Joseph Yaw Boateng and Hamidhaven Salmonas—both from Ghana—were arrested separately at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport over the last three weeks.

According to the BOC, the five may be just the latest members of an international drug syndicate "who might have thought that the Philippines is a safe haven for their illegal drugs trade."

"We will never allow the country to be used as a transshipment point for the movement of drug syndicates, much more make it a market for their illegal drugs trade," Customs Commissioner Ruffy Biazon told reporters, adding that the BOC, in cooperation with the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency now "capable of detecting even negligible narcotic substances in baggage."

"Our airport Customs officials are trained to detect suspicious passengers and cargoes, especially those suspected of carrying illegal drugs and chemicals. And while we give the best courtesy to the country's foreign visitors, we will, however, apply the full force of the law to those who violate the country's laws," he said.

According to Biazon, Nsah flew in from Dubai on Feb. 24 with nine kilos of shabu valued at P63 million. Next to be arrested was Salikuddeenlo who yielded three kilos of drugs worth P23 million on March 15.

Lim rushes home to family after fire hits condominium

By Jeannette I. Andrade

MANILA Mayor Alfredo Lim was busy signing documents at city hall before noon yesterday when he received a bit of alarming news: a fire had erupted in a building in Malate where he and his family were staying was on fire.

He immediately rushed home to the 20-story Legaspi Towers 200 at the corner of Roxas Boulevard and Pablo Ocampo Sr. Street where he was greeted by the sight of more than a dozen trucks from the Manila Fire District and volunteer fire groups parked in front of the building.

Upon learning that his family and all the other tenants were safe and that the fire had been contained, Lim promptly went back to his office and resumed his work.

Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) Director Chief Supt. Wilfredo Tamayo said that the fire started at 10:50 a.m. yesterday in the unit of a Korean national, Helen Jung, on the 15th floor.

At that time, the unit was empty.

As soon as thick smoke billowed from Jung's unit, the fire alarm went off and the water sprinklers were turned on, preventing the flames from spreading quickly.

At the same time, the building administrator asked the tenants to leave their units and wait in the lobby until the smoke had cleared.

But since the fire was soon to have been contained, some tenants chose to remain inside their units and await the fire truck's arrival.

The members of Lim's family, who were inside their unit on the 20th floor at the time the fire broke out, were among those who were evacuated.

By 12:45 p.m., Director Tamayo said that the fire, bearing ladders reaching up to the 15th floor where they trained their hoses directly into the burning unit.

Tamayo estimated the damage to property at P1 million although he clarified that the amount only covered the burned unit and not the adjacent ones which sustained some water damage.

Initially, there were reports that the fire was sparked by a fire inside the unit's owner had forgotten to unplug.

The arson investigators, however, said that the cause remains under investigation.

Lim, meanwhile, commended all government and volunteer firefighters for their immediate response.

He also expressed gratitude that none of the residents, including his family, was hurt and that except for water damage, the other units in the tower were spared by the blaze.

THIS SENT MAYOR LIM RUSHING HOME A fire hit one of the units on the 15th floor of Legaspi Towers 200 on Roxas Boulevard corner Pablo Ocampo Sr. St. in Manila on Thursday, the floor below the residence of the city's highest official. MARIANNE CHAN

DOJ reopens Orate slay probe; heirs cite 'close-range gunshots'

By Jerome Aning

THE DEPARTMENT of Justice yesterday began its reinvestigation of last month's killing of Noel Orate at the house of his longtime girlfriend, Jessica Quezon City Rep. Nanette Castelo-Daza.

Jose Bringas, lawyer for Daza's heirs, submitted documents supporting claims by the victim's family that Noel's death was premeditated and that the shooter, Daza's out-in-law and Bulacan provincial board member Allan Bobet, should have been charged with murder and not just homicide.

The documents included a medico-legal report by forensic chief Dr. Raquel Fortun and the crime scene report of the police officers who responded to the shooting at Daza's home on Mississippi Street in Matandang Teachers Village East, Quezon City on Feb. 10.

"These documents debunk [Daza's] claim of self-defense. Since [Daza] was shot at close range, it shows that it was premeditated," Bringas told reporters.

The lawyer said both reports indicated that Noel's corpse had seven fatal gunshot wounds and that two of the five gunshot wounds he sustained were inflicted at a close range.

After the hearing, Fortun said her conclusion was that Orate "was already on the floor when he was shot two more times."

"In our view, all five shots were shot at close range," she said.

Bobet, who had since posted bail after being initially charged with homicide, had claimed that Orate tried to hold merbers of Daza's family hostage when he barged in armed and drunk that night, prompting him to shoot Orate in self-defense.

Also present at the DOJ hearing, Daza's son Noel Jr. refused to show his family's bullet slugs for the case.

Meanwhile, a mall security supervisor denied allegations that he and the other guards did not provide assistance to responding firemen immediately after the blaze broke out on Friday night.

Julius Apostadero said in a statement he submitted to investigator PO3 Benedicto Tadle—who was in charge of the case before it was turned over to the task force—that he had ordered his subordinates to aid the firemen. He added that he also directed them to open the mall's doors to allow the firefighters to enter the establishment.

However, Apostadero said that the firemen did not arrive right away because of the thick smoke inside the building.

After putting on their breathing equipments, the firemen then went into the building in pairs, he added.

He also said that he directed the firefighters to the mall where the blaze broke out, contrary to earlier reports.

Pasig

Mallegaly made the announcement as he cited "inconsistencies" in the reporter's e-mailed statement to the media on Wednesday, which reiterated that some members of the Pasig police force involved in the drug trade and were behind by the leader of the gang men who ambushed Angeles.

He said there were no recorded cases of arrest operation against alleged drug dealer Ahmad Santiago Tamano, a suspect in the killing of Mayor Feliciano Mangaoang

were also referred from the past.

Dr Aiko Feliciano Mangaoang

METRO
Citizen's Call
NEW
Write Citizen's Call to ask questions that's nearest to you and to your community... Send this to 4467.
Then, you can also tell us where you are in this picture and we'll find out.
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• Street clippings thrown on the street where you live?
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• Need by a little-known barangay project with a big, positive impact in your community?
• Got stuck in potholes?
• Fed up with running and hunting engineers?
• Is there an everyday risk posed to your neighborhood?
• Straightforward but thorn on your way to work?
JUST TEXT [illegible] to 4467
P.S. INQUIRER

PhilPost workers ask female boss to quit

By Jaymee T. Gamil

ONLY eight months since she assumed office, the country's first female postmaster general has come under fire from disappointed employees who want her out.

Around 200 Philippine Postal Corp. workers rallied yesterday for the resignation of Josefina de la Cruz as they staged a rally in front of the Manila PhilPost Office at Liwasang Bonifacio during their lunch break.

After a Mass celebrated by Fr. Robert Reyes, officers of the PhilPost Workers Union (PWU) and the PhilPost Bonds and File Employees Association (Phabea) who were dressed in black shirts launched the "Bangon Movement 2."

The panel members' main complaint was the widespread layoffs which, according to them, were implemented by De la Cruz without the affected employees being given due process. Phabea president Manuel Rama said.

PWU president Tom Balmaceda added that since July around 250 workers, mostly casuals, have been dismissed. He added that they had received information that the number would balloon to around a thousand by the end of the month.

"They cite cost-cutting and rationalization" under Executive Order 366 as their reason but the la Cruz has increased her own salary by P126,000 to P155,000. She has also appointed 55 new staffers with salary grades (ranging) from P50,000 to P70,000," he said.

Boatload for comment, the PhilPost administration said in a statement that De la Cruz's "effective management measures," which include the rationalization plan, resulted in a P1.28 million profit for the agency last year, "a significant turning which [has] never been experienced by the corporation in the past years."

It added that it was interpreting the issue and protest as "an encouragement to the PhilPost community that we are not alone in our commitment to transform the company into a more competitive and active participant in nation-building, and making sure that we are properly guided by the very values that promote transparency, good governance and a culture of excellence amongst the PhilPost workforce."

CHILD SMOKERS! Kids enjoy a rich experience that produced a so-called "furry solution" at the Mad Science Exhibit in New Manila, Quezon City, which has lined up a series of interactive educational activities for the summer

The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Chanco

FRENCH President Nicolas Sarkozy stands at a ceremony to pay homage to three soldiers allegedly killed by Mohammad Merah and also suspected in the killings of three Jewish children and a rabbi. –

Standoff with terror suspect enters 2nd day

TOULOUSE, France—France's chief suspect in an al-Qaida-linked killing spree wants to "die with weapons in his hands," the interior minister said Thursday, in a standoff between the gunman and hundreds of police entering a second day.

Suspicions mounted that the gunman, holed up in an apartment in the southern city of Toulouse, may have already committed suicide. Interior Minister Claude Guean said Thursday morning that the suspect had not contacted negotiators since Wednesday night.

Police pulled squads set off sporadic blasts throughout the night and into the morning—none that blew off the apartment's shutters—in what officials described as a tactic aimed to pressure 24-year-old Fenaheman Mohamed Merah to give up.

Ten or three gendarmes were heard from the area of the apartment building overnight. The interior minister said the source of gendarme was unclear.

Authorities say Merah has boasted about carrying out the shootings of three Jewish schoolchildren, a rabbi, and three French paratroopers in three separate incidents over the last two weeks. They say he believed to be the first incidents of killings inspired by Islamic radical motives in France in more than a decade.

"We hope that he is still alive," Guean said, stressing that neither cops' priority is to capture him alive. He said the gunman earlier told negotiators that he wanted to "die with weapons in his hands."

Police were using their advantages—numbers, firepower and psychological pressure—in hopes of ensuring down Merah, who has had no water, electricity, gas or most likely deep since the early hours of Wednesday.

Behind up alone in an otherwise evacuated apartment building, Merah clung to the few remaining assets like a small armored and automatic bogus of taking him alive. He appeared in no rush: police negotiations—first saying he would surrender in the afternoon, then under the cover of darkness, then wrapping up those pledges altogether, officials said. AP

Soldiers overthrow Mali gov't

BAMAKO, Mali—Soldiers stormed state television and announced early Thursday that they had seized control of the country, dissolving all of its institutions due to the nation's mishandling of an insurgency in the north.

On national television, a group of about 20 soldiers were shown in fatigues revealing around a desk facing the camera. They introduced themselves as the National Committee for the Reconstitution of Democracy and the Restoration of the State.

"The CNRDR representing all the elements of the armed forces, defensive forces and security forces has decided to assume its responsibilities and end the incompetent and unmotivated regime of [President] Amadou Toumani Touré," said their spokesman, reading from a statement. "All the institutions of the republic are dissolved until further notice ... The objective of the CNRDR does not in any way aim to confiscate power, and we solemnly swear to return power to a democratically elected president as soon as national unity and territorial integrity are reestablished."

The sound of gunfire could be heard from the direction of the presidential palace.

A soldier at the palace who requested anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the press said that the presidential bodyguards had failed to defend the seat of government against the renegade soldiers, who burst in.

They searched the grounds but could not find Touré, the country's democratically elected leader who was due to step down at the end of his current term next month.

The soldier said that Touré had retreated to the army bogus on Wednesday morning at a military camp in the capital, during a visit by Defense Minister Gen. Sadio Gassouna. In his speech to the troops, the minister failed to address the grievances of the candidate soldiers, who are angry over what they say is the government's mismanagement of a rebellion in the north by Touré's government. The rebellion has claimed the lives of numerous soldiers, and those sent to fight are not given sufficient supplies, including

TOURE

arms or food. Their widows have not received compensation.

Residents started filling into the streets on Wednesday and they around the president's car as it raced away. By afternoon, soldiers had surrounded the state television station in central Bamako, sending both the television and radio signals off the air for more than 7 hours. By Wednesday evening, troops had started clashing at a military garrison located in the southern town of Gao, some 1,200 miles away.

A freelance journalist from Bamako who was driving to her hotel near the US station at around 5 p.m. local time on Wednesday said that trucks full of soldiers had surrounded the state broadcasters.

"We saw a couple of trucks with military on them. They arrived and started setting up checkpoints. There were military in the streets, stopping people," said Kimberly Hodge. "When we reached our hotel which is just in front of the TV station, there were lots of military outside, and more cars kept arriving—pickup trucks with soldiers on them."

She said that they set up two machine gun facing the building.

In Washington, DC State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland said: "The situation is currently unclear and unfolding quickly," she said. "There are reports of military officers surrounding the president's palace and movement of vehicles between the palace and the military barracks."

The Touré uprising that began in mid-January is being fueled by arms leftovers from the civil war in neighboring Libya. Tens of thousands of people have fled the north, and refugees have spilled over into four of the countries neighboring Mali due to the uprising.

The government has not disclosed how many soldiers have been killed, but the toll has been significant. –AP

Russia, China join UN call for Syria peace plan

UNITED NATIONS—The UN Security Council demanded Wednesday that the government fully implement a peace plan by special envoy Kofi Annan, even as government forces pounded rebel-held towns around Damascus and Homs.

Russia and China, which have blocked two resolutions on Syria, backed a security council statement that called on President Bashar al-Assad to work toward a cessation of hostilities and a democratic transition. The council gave a veiled warning of future sanctions if he refuses.

The statement, which carries less weight than a formal resolution, gives strong backing to a six-point plan that Annan, the UN-Arab League envoy, put to Assad during talks in Damascus this month.

But the statement was read out, shells from Syrian troops rained down on the Homs district of Khalidiyeh.

At least 22 people have been killed in new days of bombardment in Homs, activists said. Ten died elsewhere in the country on Wednesday alone, activists said.

Thirty-nine bodies were found in the Sifsa area of Homs, activists added. They had probably been killed at the same time as 49 women and children whose embattled corpses were found on March 12.

There were also fierce clashes between rebels and security forces near an intelligence post in the Damascus suburb of Harasta, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

The UN says well over 8,000 people have been killed in Syria in the past year.

The Security Council statement called on Assad and the opposition to work with Annan "towards a peaceful settlement of the Syrian crisis and to implement carefully and immediately his initiative on joint proposal." –AFP

Burma invites West to monitor its poll

THE UNITED States said Wednesday that it was "encouraged" that Burma (Myanmar) has invited US and European representatives to monitor elections April 1, a milestone for Burma as it emerges from decades of military dictatorship.

The invitation is in the wake of steps taken by Burma's president, U Thein Sein, to pry open the country to the outside world and move toward democracy. Earlier this month, Thein Sein said the country was holding more "international-recognized" elections for only a handful of foreign diplomats, including a delegation from Nauru Burma, for the announcement Wednesday signaled that the military-backed establishment and the long-suppressed democracy movement. Aung San Suu Kyi, the head of the opposition who was kept under house arrest by the military for the better part of two decades, is running for a seat in Parliament.

The last time her party the National League for Democracy participated in elections was more than two decades ago, and the result was canceled by the military junta in power.

Significantly, however, the elections on April 1 do not threaten the ruling party's hold on power. Only 48 seats out of more than 600 are being contested. The next general elections are due until late in 2015.

But analysts say that the military establishment is having to be less monolithic than often perceived. New York Times News Service

Berjaya offering 45 all-expense-paid scholarships in Kuala Lumpur

Berjaya Pink Inc. is offering 45 scholarships for diploma in culinary arts, hospitality management, management, management, management and event management at the Berjaya University College of Hospitality in Kuala Lumpur.

The course will be for 2 1/2 years starting in September this year, shortly after the graduation of the first batch in August. The scholars will not undergo an obligation to the university graduation.

Berjaya said in a statement that the scholars only obligation is to study hard because Berjaya's director of human resources, Ms. Lee Ai Lian, is very strict on students' performance.

Berjaya Pink Inc. is a subsidiary of Berjaya Group of Malaysia, will operate more than 70 hotels and resorts in seven countries, and have investments in [illegible]

Applicants must be 18-20 years old, with a cumulative high school average grade of 85%, and with a demonstrable financial need. Further details may be gleaned from www.berjaya.ph.

Application forms, aside from the website, can be obtained from and submitted to Berjaya Pink Inc. at 11/F Cityland 10 Tower, Ayala Ave. corner Herrera St. It can also be sent to berjayahotels-admin@yahoo.ph.

Berjaya Pink receives around 1,000 applications each year. Applicants between 18 years and 25 years old. Passport [illegible] Management Corporation, Hamiltonian Leadership and Money Online.

SUN CELLULAR WARNS PUBLIC ABOUT TEXT SCAMS

In an effort to protect its subscribers from text scammers, Sun Cellular has issued a texts warning regarding recent SMS-based scams that are making rounds in the country and the mobile phone company.

"We advise the public to be especially vigilant as scammers are constantly coming up with new and creative ways of extracting money from unsuspecting mobile subscribers, particularly those using a postpaid line", says Reuben S.J. Pangan, Vice President for Customer Relationship Management of Sun Cellular.

"While this type of fraud has been around for years and despite several announcements to remind the public of the scam, it seems there have not been any real progress in bringing to a halt the operations of these scammers", Pangan adds.

Pangan said that in recent cases, the scammers who have identified themselves as representatives of Sun Cellular, stating that the receiver has been "selected" to receive a free mobile phone, only asking the subscriber to avail of free items such as load, cash, or service like exemptions and discounts, among others. The message would then require a series of numbers to be sent to 2300, which activates the scam and unintentionally sends a specific amount of load to the scammer's prepaid number.

The set of numbers "2300" is the short code number for Sun Cellular's "Give-A-Load" which is a text Sun Cellular subscribers can send their friends to whenever they choose, usually relatives, friends or co-workers.

Another modus somewhat like load scam involves scammers who impersonate as a certain subscriber claiming to be in an emergency or accident, or badly needing load credits. The scammer may pose as a child or a spouse or a parent needing load credits.

"We advise that these instances are committed in relation to the NTC's Pangan says. "Only with an NTC issuance or actual border can an effectively disconnect a prepaid line with an active load. Unfortunately, even if we do so, the scammers will simply buy a new prepaid SIM card and switch to victimize others. So the public's best defense against these scammers is to be vigilant and always check the identity of the sender."

Subscribers are advised to refer to Sun Cellular's site or for print or radio for information on official promos. Sun Cellular also regularly sends such promos or their website (www.suncellular.com.ph), as well as to popular social networking sites.

To check the legitimacy of promos, subscribers may log on to Sun Cellular's official Facebook page (www.facebook.com/pages/Sun-Cellular/) or Twitter (@SunCellular).

Customers may also call Sun Cellular's 24/7 Customer Service Hotline by dialing 300 from their cellphones.

Subscribers may report fraudulent text messages to the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) through their hotline 921-00-71.

Sun Cellular is a member of the PLDT Group.

Parents of slain Florida teen speak at NY rally

NEW YORK—Trayvon Martin's mother on Wednesday told hundreds of protesters demanding an arrest in the shooting death of the unarmed Florida teen by a neighborhood watch captain that "this is not about a black and white thing. This is about a wrong and right thing." Sybrina Fulton spoke to demonstrators at what organizers called "A Million Hoodies March" at a New York park about her son's slaying last month by watch volunteer George Zimmerman in the gated community of Sanford, Florida. Martin was wearing a hoodie at the time of his death. "Our son is your son," Fulton told the crowd. Full report to be forwarded with Dallas. Separately, the 17-year-old African-American was carrying black from a convenience store when he was followed by Zimmerman, 28, who turned a gun. Reuters

Australia captures most wanted man after 7 years

CANBERRA—Australia's most wanted man was captured holed up in a lonely mountain cabin on Thursday after seven years on the run during which time he lived in rugged wilderness often like an animal, Malcolm Naden, an Aboriginal bush survival expert and murder suspect, had been on the Australian police most famous 19th century bushranger Ned Kelly for his ability to elude police, at one stage narrowly escaping after shot at a farmhouse, Naden, 39, often broke into remote, isolated farmhouses to gain supplies before returning to inaccessible bushland, but in the early hours of Thursday the rat-and-mouse game ended when police surrounded a house in the rugged Barrington Tops a few hours drive north of Sydney. Reuters

Dozens homeless after Mexico big quake

ACAPUTPEC, Mexico—Dozens of families cleared rubble from their destroyed homes in southwestern Mexico on Wednesday following a major 7.4-magnitude earthquake that caused landslides, knocked down school walls and cracked a church tower. Reuters

WORLDBRIEFS

US says 5 nations clear out weapons-grade uranium

WASHINGTON—The US has helped five nations completely clear out their stocks of highly enriched uranium since President Barack Obama outlined his plans for securing all weapons-usable materials worldwide, officials say citing it as progress in the administration's efforts to prevent nuclear weapons from falling in terrorists' hands. Anne Harrington, the National Nuclear Security Administration's nonproliferation chief, said that since Obama's April 2009 speech in Prague announcing his plans, the US has helped remove enough material from abroad to make hundreds of nuclear bombs. She added that several global leaders are expected to use a nuclear security summit in Seoul, South Korea, which starts Sunday, to announce similar advances. Arms control experts say the most difficult part of building an atomic bomb is acquiring the weapons-grade uranium or plutonium needed for the explosive core of the weapon. Locking up or eliminating those materials is crucial to preventing nuclear-armed terror. AP

Britain cuts income tax, levies wealthy

LONDON—British finance minister George Osborne cut the top rate of income tax while imposing new levies on the wealthy, in a political high wire act designed to reignite the tumble of austerity without reversing on plans to contain a huge budget deficit. British should avoid a renewed recession and while the economy was set to remain hostage this year, growth should pick up thereafter. Osborne told parliament in his annual budget statement on Wednesday. A marathon seven-y coalition government of center-right Conservatives and more left-wing Liberal Democrats has made erasing a huge budget deficit—which topped 11 percent of GDP before it took office—within the next five years its main objective, and the latest forecasts showed it remained on track. Reuters

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Editor Raul G. Marcelo ● Assistant Editor Corrie S. Mariano
BUSINESS

Ayala Land to invest P60B in Makati

Developer bullish on prospects of real estate sector

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

REAL estate giant Ayala Land Inc. has committed to invest an unprecedented P60 billion over the next five years in various development projects designed to strengthen the status of Makati City as the country's centralized capital for business, lifestyle, entertainment and culture.

ALI president Antonino Aquino said in a briefing yesterday that the budget represents the single biggest investment that the company will make in a single city and a testament to the "aggressive stance" that the real estate company is taking in namely in "high growth cities."

The P60-billion capital expenditure budget will be spread out across its thirteen wholly-owned City where it intends to put up mixed-

Ayala Land, B6

INDICATORS

PESO-DOLLAR RATE
March 22, 2012
43.060

STOCK MARKET
March 22, 2012
5.58

PSEi ends 3-day slump

THE LOCAL stock index firmed up on Thursday after a three-day slump, posting a marginal gain, despite lingering concerns about China's growth.

The Philippine Stock Exchange index added 5.58 points, or 0.11 percent, to finish at 5,091.02.

The day's turnout was tempered by jitters on China's slowing manufacturing output.

The financial, holding firms and services counters aided the main index, but the day's gainers were the mining and oil counters which surged by 1.1 percent.

The industrial and property counters, on the other hand, ended in negative territory.

Value turnover for the day amounted to P6.20 billion. Despite the overall index gain, there were only 85 advancers which were outnumbered by 89 decliners, while 59 stocks were unchanged.

Dennis said investors lost advantage of

YLE /B4

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VOLVO'S NEW APPROACH TO LUXURY.

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Designed Around You (DAY) is the newest global thinking of Volvo. It points out the direction of Volvo's future brand development, and the key word is human. Because every detail of a Volvo car, there is a human thought and skill of a designer, a purchaser, an engineer, a marketer and many more. Designed Around You is about interaction, intimacy and the consideration of a person's every need, which translates to the highest form of luxury in life. This essence of designed around you is translated to every aspect of the Volvo brand – from the vehicles to its rewards to the ownership experience.

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The Volvo Sensus for example, is an intuitive command center designed by Volvo. With an integrated climate zone on the steering wheel, you have full control of the car and all its car entertainment, navigation, park assist camera and Bluetooth® communication systems – with both hands on the steering wheel. Convenient, smart and definitely high-tech – never before has total control been so easy to achieve.

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ENGAGING + ENTERTAINING

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*City Safety is available locally as standard on the Volvo S60 T4, T5, Volvo V60 T5, Volvo XC60 T5, S80 and S6 only.

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Gold Fields buys into Lepanto's Far Southeast

By Doris C. Dumlao and Amy R. Remo

GLOBAL mining giant Gold Fields Ltd. has acquired a 40-percent stake in Far Southeast mining project on exploration Philippines but will take more time to exercise its option to purchase another 20-percent block from mining magnate Philips Tan's Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co.

In a statement on Thursday, Gold Fields announced that it had made the remaining payment of $1.85 million needed to complete the acquisition of an initial 40-percent interest in Far Southeast through a transaction with Lepanto Resources, a previously held affiliate holding firm.

But Gold Fields has yet to exercise the option to buy another 20 percent block from Lepanto pending the acquisition of Financial or Technical Assistance Agreement (FTAA) it owns—which allows a foreign corporation to legally own and control a majority stake of large-scale mineral resources in the Philippines—for the Far Southeast project.

Gold Fields' statement suggested that it was still keen on exercising the option agreement with Lepanto, which would complete a 60-percent stake in the project, and is expecting this to happen by the second half of this year once the FTAA has been obtained.

The statement said the acquisition of its FTAA license was a monumental conditions to the exercise by Gold Fields of the Lepanto option.

In November 2011, Lepanto filed an application for the grant of the FTAA for the Far Southeast project.

Based on the date of the filing, Gold Fields anticipates the granting of the FTAA in the second half of 2012 with the remaining 20-percent option only being exercised at such days, whereupon Gold Fields shall have a 60-percent stake in the Far Southeast project," the Gold Fields statement said.

But even as Gold Fields has yet to close the deal with Lepanto, the exercise of the option deal with Liberty already gives it a sufficient foothold in the project. The exercise to acquire the 40-percent stake from Liberty remained from an option agreement signed in September 2010.

GOLD /B4

Marketing Buzz

BUSINESS Friday

E-mail: business@inquirer.com.ph
Website: www.inquirer.net/business
Business Features Editor: Margie Quimpo-Espino

Business registration in PH now made easier

Philippine Business Registry launched to help entrepreneurs

By Doris C. Dumlao

IT'S NOT fun to register a new business in the Philippines, given the legendary bureaucratic red tape that applicants must cut through.

No wonder then that in the latest World Bank competitiveness survey, the Philippines ranked 136th out of 183 economies in terms of ease of doing business.

After all, it takes workers to collect from different government agencies the documentary requirements needed to register a business.

Now comes the Department of Trade and Industry's Philippine Business Registry (PBR), which promises to make the cumbersome registration process a thing of the past and speed up the registration process to as short as 30 minutes.

Hassle-free

The plan is to roll out in a few months' worth of time a hassle-free and "hassle-less" business registration in the offices of the DTI, Securities and Exchange Commission and some local government units (LGUs).

The PBR accepts registrations for sole proprietorships as well as partnerships and corporations.

A PBR modernization was recently set up at the SEC head office in Ortigas and the plan is to put one in each of the seven offices of the corporate watchdog.

During the PBR machines, applicants for single proprietorship can get their tax identification number (TIN) from the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) as well as employer registration numbers from the Social Security System (SSS), Philippine Health Insurance Corp. (PhilHealth) and Home Development Mutual Fund (Pag-IBIG).

During the launch of the PBR at the SEC, Trade Secretary Gregory Domingo said the system would also conveniently hook up with the SEC's registration process to benefit those registering as a partnership or corporation.

Like the single proprietors, partnerships and corporations need to secure documents from the SSS, PhilHealth and Pag-IBIG, aside from getting the business name, incorporation papers and tax identification number from the SEC before they can start operations, and this is where the PBR comes in.

Through the PBR, the computerized registration systems of these agencies are interlinked so that applicants need only go physically get the business permit.

Step-by-steps

For sole proprietors, walk-in applications through DTI offices must follow the following steps:

1. Applicant fills out the DTI application form and submits it to DTI teller for processing.

2. DTI Teller reviews application's TIN. If there is an existing TIN, BIR will validate against records.

3. Business Name (BN) Certificate and Employer's Registration Number (ERN) are processed.

A Transaction Reference Number (TRN) is presented to Cashier for payment of BN fee.

Official Receipt of Payment is presented to the DTI Releasing Officer for the BN Certificate.

Applicant gets SSS, PhilHealth, and Pag-IBIG MRN from DTI teller.

4. Certificate of Registration of employer ID can be secured from agencies upon presentation of PBR-processed BNRs.

For SEC-registered corporations, walk-in applications through teller at DTI Offices or SEC must follow the following steps, but note that any partnerships or corporations already registered with the SEC can apply:

1. Applicant fills out the PBR application form and submits to the teller for encoding and processing.

2. Applicant also submits photocopies of complete SEC registration documents (i.e., SEC registration certificate, articles of partnership/incorporation). Original copies are required for confirmation.

3. Teller transmits application for employer registration number (ERN) to SSS, PhilHealth, and Pag-IBIG and applicant gets PBR-generated ERNs.

4. Certificate of Registration of Employer ID can be secured from agencies upon presentation of PBR-generated ERNs.

Boosting competitiveness

Domingo expressed confidence that with the PBR as well as other reforms, the Philippines should exist among the top 60 when it comes to ease in doing business by 2014.

Each registration costs about P250-1,000, said Domingo, and the government is ready to invest in a few hundred of these machines to help spur business growth.

Domingo said the project actually started in 2006, but there were little progress. So when the new administration assumed office in July 2010, the DTI pushed for its more aggressive implementation.

Yebenzhir it would be down to six months but it took much longer because it's a very complicated system. We need to have real-time access to the computers of five different agencies and they have five different systems requiring different protocols. So it took a while to settle down," he said.

With the PBR in place, Domingo said the government will now turn its attention to implementing other reforms designed to make it easier for businesses to do business in the country.

To support these efforts, SEC chair Teresita Herbosa said the SEC had launched its own "green lane" processing unit, tied up with the Land Bank of the Philippines and established an extension office in Subic.

The SEC's "green lane" offers faster processing of applications of new corporations and partnerships.

This green lane, however, is not available to corporations whose subscribed capital is not paid in cash, those with more than 40 percent foreign equity or those that require a secondary license issued by the SEC.

Land Bank, meanwhile, is designed to accept, process applications, requirements and collect the filing fee in its 328 branches.

"Secretary Domingo is at its operations. This isn't just for the payment of a one-stop drop. It's supposed to be part of a bigger data-sharing project among government agencies," Herbosa said.

"Once we're reached that point that we're sharing data and other information and we have statistics on what kind of businesses are being registered or terminated, we can use that data for economic purpose," Herbosa added.

TRADE Secretary Gregory Domingo (second from left) and SEC chair Teresita Herbosa (right) unveil the PBR's new location in the SEC lobby.

GOINGS-ON

Golden ABC gets award

Golden ABC (GABC), the country's fashion process and owner of leading brands Penshoppe, Bayo, Enfila, Manic, Pagatha, Tyler, and its three-selling subsidiary Print Logo, was presented with the People Program of the Year (PPY) citation by the People Management Association of the Philippines (PMAP) at their 35th Awards Night held recently in Baguio City.

Bernie Ok, CEO & president of GABC, received the award that recognized the company's "8P'S+1" program as a testament to the brand's holy embodiment of its relevant, unique, innovative and cutting-edge human capital program.

Liz Lim said it has 20,000-strong employees nationwide. "I thank our employees for embracing us with lots of gratitude that has led to widespread consideration and public opinion even after work hours. In the same way that our programs are to develop them, they develop our programs as well. Together with our employees, we hope to become the most admired Asian fashion brands company," added Lim.

"AFTER 5" is Golden ABC's program for development activities, and the vehicle of the company's core values and culture, pulling employees in the spotlight and growing their ownership of their chosen activities.

2012 APEC SME Conference slated for July

Preparations for the 2012 APEC SME Conference slated for July 6 more on full swing as some 40 delegates including chief executives of member SME Banks in the region are expected to attend.

Taking the lead and playing host is Planters Bank, the country's lead bank for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and the only Philippine financial institution that was invited to be a member of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Financial Institutions Steering with Small and Medium Enterprises (APEC SME).

The goals of the APEC SME Summit are for the member institutions to (1) exchange views on topics related to SME finance, and (2) to establish a cooperative system among the APEC SME members in order to support SMEs in the APEC region.

The first APEC SME Summit was held in 2003. This will be the first time the Philippines is hosting this annual summit, which is slated from July 10-20, 2012 at the Sofitel Philippine Plaza.

MAP recognizes Petron

Petron Corp. recently bagged two coveted distinctions from the Management Association of the Philippines (MAP), including the Integrated ESH Award for its success in making social responsibility an essential part of its business operations.

It had stonefished by any other oil company. Petron bagged the prestigious Integrated ESH Award at the 2nd MAP-CSR Leadership Challenge for its "Sustaining Growing, Giving Back: Making CSR and Sustainability Part of What Petron" strategy along with the Best in Environment and Sustainable Development Special Award for its "Mainstreaming Managing and Minimizing the Environmental Footprint in Refining" program.

In winning the Integrated ESH Award, the MAP recognized Petron's relentless effort in integrating social responsibility into its overall corporate strategy, as shown by the company's commitment to care for the community and the environment, while achieving its economic objectives.

"Our leadership in the oil industry is also tested by our commitment to create a positive impact on every community where fuels are loaded on a daily basis," Petron chair and CEO Ramon S. Ang said. "This means conducting our business in a manner that places equal importance on our social and environmental commitments together with our business objectives."

In winning the Special Award for Environment and Sustainable Development, MAP recognized the company's initiatives to protect the environment and promote sustainable development in Batangas.

Students put winning business plan into action

Text and photos by Cris Evert B. Lato
Inquirer Visayas

Seeds of Hope to provide jobs to 20 women in Mandaue City

University of Cebu-Banilad students win the "Tatak Changemaker" Social Enterprise Business Plan Competition.

CEBU CITY—They only wanted to win a business plan competition and bring home the top prize of P100,000.

But after realizing their dream, four Cebu student-teams did not find what they had won the beginnings of something big.

"The plan has to be implemented, and it has to be implemented well because this is a social enterprise, a business that will help people," says student Jeanel Ann Seachon of the University of Cebu-Banilad (UC) business administration.

British Council contest

Architect, accountancy students Lloyd Stephen Orbiano and Sheryl Benitez and UC graduate Jean Miller joined the competition "Tatak Changemaker," a social enterprise business plan competition for prospective young entrepreneurs conducted by the British Council last year.

They teamed and were the four groups of winners from among over 100 nationwide. Each winner received P100,000 and an opportunity to establish their own business with a partner community.

The group's business plan, called "Seeds of Hope," was designed to provide livelihood opportunities for 20 women in Barangay Ouspad, Mandaue City by converting oil from mango seeds.

"We were trying to think of a product that will represent Cebu—a product that will be sustainable and economically relevant," says Miller, 21.

A visit to the Bureau of Forest, Inc. also yielded research that revolved the viability of converting oil from mango seeds to mango kernels.

Oil and butter extracted from mango, are rich in vitamins and minerals which are used as ingredients for beauty and cosmetic products.

"We learned that the peel and seed of the mango comprise 30 percent of the fruit, and then we just discarded after separating the flesh," says Miller.

These matters supposedly make up 70 percent of the seed weight. An average mango kernel contains 6 to 10 percent extract potential (both oil and butter).

The four-time Cebu is home to the largest mango processing companies inspired them more to flesh the business plan. They included the companies as partners in their project.

Benitez, a third year accountancy student, says the project addresses environmental and socio-economic issues.

He says the project hopefully will minimize the amount of garbage thrown in Barangay Ouspad, Mandaue City's dump.

Mango kernels

The women of Barangay Ouspad, on the other hand, will earn money by drying mango kernels and selling them at a particular price to the group.

Another option is for the women to do the entire processing themselves—from drying to extracting—with supervision from the group, according to Orbiano.

Orbiano says the oil can then be sold to manufacturing companies of beauty products. The Filipino company Candaba Kalikasan Inc., which produces organic personal care products under the Human Nature brand, has initially expressed interest in the oil.

"We love how this project has made us help people by not making them depend on us. The project gushes to work for what they will earn," says Orbiano.

And that, UC says winning the competition has made them think about what they want to do after graduation.

Oil can be extracted from mango seeds, which are considered waste by many mango-processing companies in Cebu.

Empowering

"We see us strangers in business plan writing because we have participated in various contests where we help people improve their businesses. This competition allows us to build our own business. This is very empowering and at the same time very challenging," says Seachon.

The group is being mentored by UC professor Christopher Bero and Judy Acedo-Lato.

Stevens says they will guide the students in establishing their enterprise to ensure that the objectives of the project are achieved.

Bero says that it is inspiring to see his students doing something practical and socially-centered for the community.

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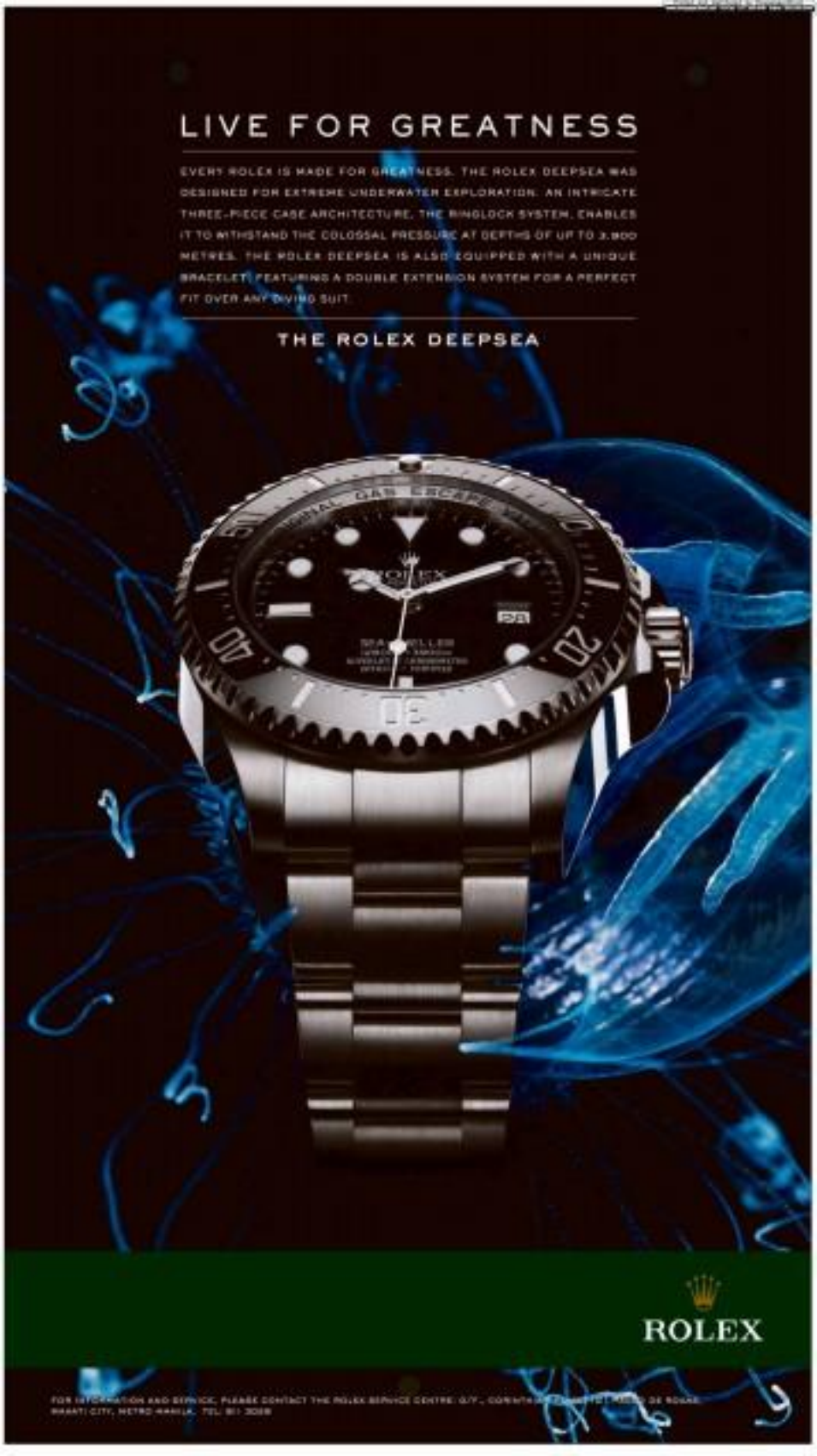

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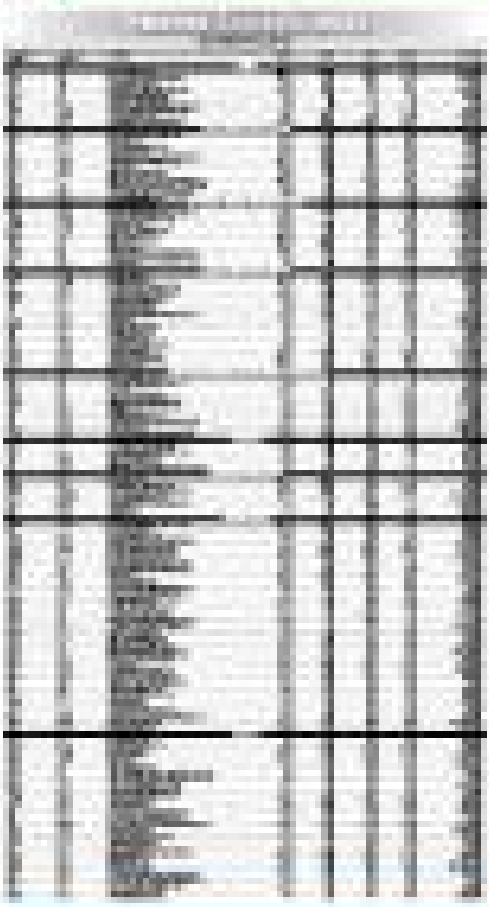

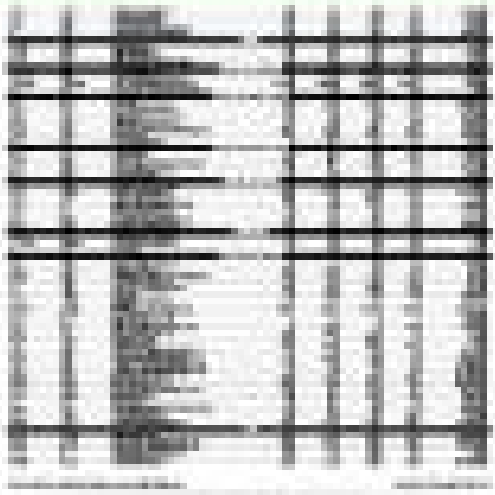

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GT Capital to expand power investments

Ty firm to bid for state-owned assets

By Doris C. Dumlao

GT Capital Holdings Inc. of tycoon George Ty is keen on expanding its power generation assets by bidding for state-owned assets scheduled for privatization, such as the four power barges outside Luzon and the Tiwi-Mak Luzon geothermal power plant.

Capital Holdings president Carmelo Maria Luza Bautista said in a recent briefing related to the conglomerate's stock debut via initial public offering that the barges were attractive as these are in areas where the company wants to operate.

Bautista said the GT group was among the 12 bidders currently vying for these power barges. It also wants to participate in the bidding for the 640-megawatt Tiwi-Mak Luzon Geothermal power plant.

The government will split the capacity of this complex so that each winner will get only a 200- or 500-MW share in the capacity, Bautista said.

Bautista said the Philippines offered a lot of room for growth in the power generation business as electricity consumption per capita was low compared to neighbors.

He noted that the P45.5-billion investment in Cebu Energy and Panay Energy by GT Holdings unit Global Business Power and its partners was one of the single biggest investments in the Visayas in recent years.

Bautista noted that Global Business was now a leading power producer in the Visayas with 612 MW of combined capacity from its nine power plants.

GT Capital has set the indicative price of its upcoming stock debut at between P415 and P470 per share for an initial public offering size of up to P22.2 billion.

Ayala Land to invest P60B

From page B1

ate development, but about half of it will go into the continuous redevelopment of the Ayala Center, including the Makati central business district.

Another P30 billion will be invested in the development of the Ala Ala district—on the former Sta. Ana racetrack—into an environment-centered area, with the balance going to to the Makati South (on the corner of Elsa and McKinley Sts., heading toward Rufino St.), Makati North (near the Makati Medical Center) and Ayala Triangle districts.

According to Aquino, ALI's decision to invest a significant amount in Makati CBD was prompted by renewed optimism and confidence in the Aquino administration as well as the country's economic prospects.

Company expectations are that the country will yield an annual economic growth over the next five years of at least 5 percent. This can even go up to 6 percent a year if infrastructure spending acceleration and public-private partnership projects become reality.

Dwindling low interest rates and controlled inflation, which have a direct impact on the sales of real estate projects, are likewise contributing to the bullishness of the Ayala group.

Gold Fields buys into Lepanto's

From page B1

Gold Fields has paid downpayments amounting to $44 million and $66 million in September 2010 and September 2011, respectively. The total consideration paid for the 40 percent interest was $220 million.

Gold Fields recognizes the positive results of the ongoing due diligence studies in the Far Southeast project. One acquisition of the 40 percent stake, pursuant to the terms of the agreement, reflects our commitment to the project, the Philippines and the host community. Gold Fields looks forward to the acquisition of the remaining 30 percent stake upon the issuance of the FTAA," said Gold Fields CEO Nick Holland.

Farmers' tribute to Isagani Yambot

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

COMMENTARY

IS A tribute to Isagani Yambot, Rosalyn Glen wrote: "Gani, considered a giant in the Philippines media industry, is a simple man, a loving father, a passionate teacher and a staunch defender of [press] freedom.' Not known to many, Gani was also a true friend of the Filipino farmers. He inspired the growth and strengthening of Alyansa Agrikultura (AA). AA is a nationwide farmer-fisherfolk coalition with 42 federations and organizations covering all major agricultural sectors.

Background

Gani's soul is partly captured by Pat Evangelista's description in 'Alter Ego': "I have heard him called as one of the last idealists of Philippine journalism. This is the most caught-eating while fighting a cause. He also IT people were exhilarated dead in the slaughter in Maguindanao."

It is this compassion that many farmer leaders seized when they met Gani, together with the strong principles he showed when he opposed the Estrada administration's invasion of the Moro lands.

In 2003, when these leaders saw their fight for justice jeopardized by the forced exit of three of their key allies in the Department of Agriculture (DA), they sought strength through a united voice. But how could this be heard?

"Why not through the most widely circulated newspaper?" they asked. So they went to Gani, especially because of his compassion and principles. Gani responded by providing these leaders the opportunity for a weekly published commentary. This is where important agricultural issues could be identified and recommendations made.

Gani's action strengthened the leaders' resolve to organize first its multi-agricultural sector, then as a united voice for agriculture. The two farmer leaders in Nueva Ecija would join their counterparts from Bukidnon through the National Rice Farmers' Council. The same would be done for other subsectors. Examples are the fisherfolk through the Bilis-ang Mangingisda, the poultry raisers through the Unban Broiler Raisers Association, the hog producers through the Pork Producers Association, and the women farmers through the Nationwide Federation of Women Farmers.

Success

Pointers found out that the weekly commentaries made possible by Gani would all to prove even more effective in achieving their objectives than talkies, which are time-consuming and expensive.

The published commentaries and recommendations would be sent to the appropriate decision-makers, who know that their response would be recorded and possibly published in succeeding commentaries. Swift and favorable actions from these decision-makers would often ensue. A few of the many successes will be mentioned here.

A Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) order terminating all community-based Forest Management Agreements was reached after a meeting with DENR officials on such a commentary. This action prevented the massive destruction of former "kaingeros" and the forest denudation by unscrupulous big business interests.

When a Senate hearing resulting from a commentary on rampant onion smuggling, the Bureau of Customs (BOC) took immediate action for fear that their further inaction would be publicized and penalized. This helped save the livelihood of approximately 80,000 onion farmers.

When government contemplated massive rice importation which would drastically decrease rice prices, Gani arranged provisions for the commentary "How to Ruin Farmers and Consumers Instantly" to be on the business front page. The planned massive importation was not pursued because of the widely publicized damaging effect on rice farmer incomes.

Partly because of the weekly business exposure, key AA leaders were recognized as official Philippine delegates representatives to the World Trade Organization (WTO) Sixth Ministerial Conference in December 2005. This was the first time farmer leaders formed part of a Philippine delegation to an international trade conference. They assisted their significantly in preventing unfair and excessive tariff reduction that would have impoverished the farmers. Today, AA leaders are among the key organizers of AP 2025 with Agriculture Secretary Proceso Alcala and Congressional Agriculture Committee chairs Senator Francis Pangilinan and Representative Mark Mendoza.

Conclusion

National Press Club (NPC) president Jerry Esplanada said: "He did not only write. He did not only edit. He did not only publish. He taught many NPC members including those illiterates in journalism how to have worked under the tutelage of this man who can be considered as one in a million. He is not dead."

To the small farmers and fisherfolk, Gani will continue to live in their hearts. This is because he gave them the inspiration, guidance and opportunity to fight successfully for their shared goals of truth, social justice and economic progress.

(The author is chair of Agrinasuli, former secretary for presidential flagship programs and projects, and former undersecretary for Agriculture, and Trade and Industry. For inquiries and suggestions, email agrisearch_phil@yahoo.com or telephone (02) 9522237.)

SMDC raising ₱4B for expansion

By Doris C. Dumlao

RESIDENTIAL property developer SM Development Corp. is raising P4 billion through the sale of debt paper to selected institutional investors for its expansion plans, its chairman of the Philippine Stock Exchange, SMDC said in board lot approved the issuance of fixed-rate corporate notes and named BDO Capital and Investment Corp. and Standard Chartered Bank as joint lead managers.

Top corporations usually count on issuance of corporate notes, instead of retail bonds, as a quicker way of raising funds. Because corporate notes are issued to no more than 19 institutional investors, the documentation process is less tedious.

SMDC said the determination of terms and conditions of the corporate notes had been delegated to Roland Ong, the management.

SMDC grew its net profit last year by 20 percent to P4.18 billion on a double-digit increase in revenue from residential development projects. Consolidated revenue reached P16.997 billion, up by 79 percent year on year. Cash flow based on earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization (EBITDA) reached P6.09 billion, for an EBITDA margin of 36 percent.

In a recent study done by the Advisory and Research Services of Colliers International Philippines, SMDC captured the largest market share of 24 percent in Metro Manila. It has consistently been considered one in Colliers' property surveys since July 2009.

SMDC has 25 residential projects under its SM Residences brand and two projects under the M Place brand. Five more condominium projects will be launched in Metro Manila this year.

Increased investments in industries needed

By Michelle V. Rama

THE DESIRE of the Philippines to post faster economic growth of 7.0 percent is attainable, but the country needs to also focus investment support on the capital-intensive industrial sector.

This was according to the Asian Development Bank, which said the country's decent but relatively stagnant pace of growth and its failure to trim the proportion of poor Filipinos can be traced to the lack of investments in the industrial sector.

Although the robust growth of the services sector was quite helpful, the ADB said this should come together with heavy investments in the industrial sector.

Maria Tosi, country director of the ADB for the Philippines, said that unlike the services sector, the industrial sector required much bigger capital and offered employment opportunities even to people who failed to complete formal education.

This sector, therefore, has better ability to lift more poor people out of poverty compared with the services sector, he said.

"To increase the potential growth of the Philippines, the country must work (using) two legs," Tosi said, referring to both sectors, during an economic briefing organized by the Management Association of the Philippines (MAP).

The services sector, which is driven by the business process outsourcing industry, has significantly fueled economic growth over the past decades.

Be good, eat good this Lenten Season

While the sweltering months signal a wide range of fun activities to do this summer, it's not true that it's also time to overindulge and splurge on delicacies and food out of the long, Holy Week break!

• Combine road trip with pilgrimage. Join an organized Iloilo Iglesia tour and make meals as you can marvel on the different churches you'll visit. If budget permits, why not plan your own Visita Iglesia tour and head on to churches outside your vicinity?

• The kiosquitos of the Holy Week should also make for an ideal time to check up on your growing list of must-reads and piles of unread paperbacks. Stay at home and curl up in your bathroom, while savoring the pages of that novel you have long been intending to start. Better yet, try to browse through the Bible and retrace on its verses.

• All-you-can-eat buffet dinners in the country, the Holy Week is a perfect time to bond with your family at home. Temporarily let go of the gadgets and take a break from Facebook or Twitter and have quality conversation with your parents and siblings.

• While the season demands some moments such as abstaining from meat, avoiding meat should not mean having a bland diet. Be innovative the easy way as Jollibee brings back its delicious Tuna Pie this Lent. Its generous filling of chunky tuna flakes smothered in a golden crisp crust lets you have a satisfying snack any day of the Lent for only P20 and P40 if you want it with regular drinks.

Taking good this Lenten season should not be so difficult at all with these scrumptious activities. For good, be good this Holy Week.

MPTC may delist from local exchange

By Paolo G. Montecillo

THE MANUEL V. Pangilinan group's toll road investment arm will likely delist its shares from the Philippine Stock Exchange in light of the standing rule for public firms to maintain a float of at least 10 percent.

Metro Pacific Tollways Corp. (MPTC) president and CEO Francis Fernandez said the company might opt to move the lead factors the said MPTC was making enough money to exercise this early redemption for expiration.

"There is no urgent need to raise funds by selling equity. Our projects are not yet a drain on our current resources," he said.

MPTC shares, which are traded using the symbol "TOL," last traded at P6. It has a public float of only 0.2 percent, way below the 10 percent requirement of the PSE.

Fernandez said if the need to raise funds through a share sale should arise, this could be done through MPTC parent Metro Pacific Investments Corp.

MPIC shares reached a year-high of P4.22 per share last week, in line with the performance of the main index which breached the 5,300 mark this month.

For the year, Fernandez said MPIC's internally-generated funds would be enough to bankroll existing projects.

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10 THINGS TO LOVE ABOUT THE CHEVY CRUZE

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LOOK oh-so-feminine in a halo-light billowy frock and a dainty shoulder bag.

From clothes to 'it' bags, Chloé mixes Brit attitude and Parisian flair

'There's a sense of feminine complicity, sensitivity and sunniness in this collection'

By Carmencita S. Sioson
Contributor

THIS SEASON, the British creative director of Chloé, Clare Waight Keller, injects a Brit attitude into the brand's Parisian style.

"I looked at festival girls, girls on the street and David Bailey's photos of Kate Moss and Jacqueline Bisset on a beach," said Keller of her inspiration. She is the former protégé of Scotland designer

She added: "There's a sense of feminine complicity, sensitivity and sunniness in this collection."

Paris fashion house Chloé, a brand associated with various feminine personalities, adds yet another one to the Chloé girl.

More than 50 years after the brand's founder Gaby Aghion imagined it, Chloé still exudes its romantic, ultra-feminine fashion, with a free tussle through the years, from designers such as Karl Lagerfeld, Stella McCartney, Phoebe Philo and Hannah MacGibbon.

Chloé, keeping its trademark of luxurious pret-à-porter, continues to address just about every occasion in a young woman's life while offering cool, different ways of putting things together.

Pastels for summer

Chloé's latest pieces are rife with in chalky pastels mixed with nude hues and bright accents. They're for any woman's style—whether it's hastily-worn ensembles or unconventional dressed-up glamour.

The look was relaxed, from day to evening. If the Brad-yet boyish silhouettes were a nod to the 1970s, the Parisian flare came by way of girlish floral embroideries and a playful mix of plaids.

Shirtdresses were all about summer freshness, in crepe de Chine or lightweight cotton or linen. Billowy dresses, below-the-knee A-line skirts, loose trousers, and shorts

FROM C2

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From clothes to 'it' bags, Chloé mixes . . .

From page C3

completed the sexy day-to-eve and resort-wear look.

Arm candy

Chloé's above sassy fashion endeavors include its leather goods.

Spotted on celebrities such as Kate Hudson, Sharlize Theron, Mary-Kate Olsen, and Jessica Miller, Chloé's "Paraty" shoulder bag has received as much hype as 2002's his "Paddington" bag.

In various basic and textured stuffs in black python, brown nerone leather, and cream white leather, the statement bag with its rolled-leather, horseshoe-inspired detail.

Another "it" bag is the "Silverado," which has a pin-tucked horseshoe design on its front flap pocket, a studded logo, and subtle gold hardware details—perfect for lugging around from daytime meetings to nights out in the town.

To top off your summer ensemble, there's the Chloé tote bag dubbed "Bagis" in the brand's natural color palette, with accents of bright hues.

While this collection's feminine yet modern attitude, spontaneous charm, and youthful take on elegant dressing, let your hair down and step out in easy beauty pieces to go with your fresh-faced look—all in true Chloé girl fashion.

Chloé bags are available at Adora, Greenbelt 5, Ayala Center Makati City.

CHLOÉ: Chic in a multi-colored ensemble, topped off with a pretty pink "Madeleine" bag.

GOTHAM: An eyesight-catching shoulder bag.

LIFESTYLE Fashion&Beauty

Top brow-raising problems solved

Thick full brows are back with a vengeance, the thin-brow look is now considered overplucked

KNOCKOUT! Ria Francisca-Prieto

MY FRIEND drew her brows as soon as she woke up in the morning. She has been thinking of having eyebrow implants done but her doctor said she has to be 121 percent ready for it.

Aside from it being costly, sometimes the hair that grows sooner not lucky and still not like how natural brow hair grows. In other words, the better stick on cheating her brows every day.

The eyebrow frames the eyes, and most

BACKUP Kloriss and her equally famous eyebrows

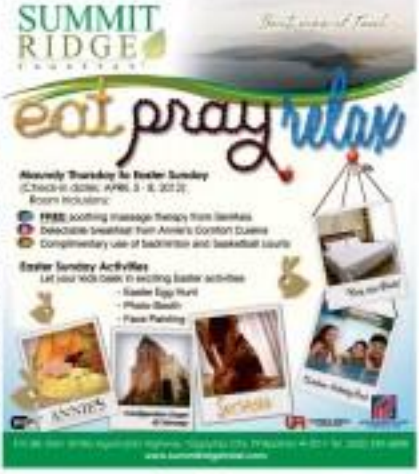


Photo credit: Harvey Tapao

Photo credit: TRAVELIFE Magazine

A gem for all seasons

Let your stunning strands shine in the sun

THE Christmas holidays have long passed, and the last romantic Valentine's dinner is now a sweet memory. As the weather warms and the sun begins to shine brighter, perhaps it's time to put away your precious pearl jewelry, to be worn once more only as cooler climes, and far more formal, urban occasions. Right?

Think again. Just as summer in this archipelago is always a celebration of the sun, the sea, and the great outdoors, your pearl jewelry remains the perfect accessory for relaxation and adventure.

Pearl strands, a staple in every stylish woman's jewelry box, is the most versatile of necklaces. They can be worn from morning meetings to evening cocktails, and every other event in between. A strand of perfectly matched pearls can add just the right touch of femininity to a pair of jeans and a casual shirt for a laid-back afternoon. Change into a designer ensemble after dark and add on that pearl strand, and you couldn't be better dressed.

Consider bending the "rules" even further? Why not take your pearls all the way to the beach? The good news is, pearls flower on contact with human skin, so don't be afraid to keep them on even if you're under the sun. It's also the best time for sexy, skin-baring styles that look right at home in tropical sorts, sailing on a yacht under a cloudless blue sky, or at sizzling summer night parties on the beach. What better way to accessorize a rich tan than with a glowing pearl necklace?

Since pearls are natural gems that need no chemicals to maintain their luster, take that out and opt for a relaxed look. Keep your face bare, keep your hair down, and put on your pearls, for a find that's both carefree and exotic. All you need is a perfectly matched choker to adorn the collarbones, perhaps, or a luxurious rope to pull a bohemian look together—and you're ready to class.

All your pearls need is regular cleaning with a soft, damp cloth and careful storage to keep them beautiful for years. It's good to know that when it's time to head back for that evening out to the city or that important business meeting, these versatile jewels will still look right at home. In the meantime, take your pearls along as you celebrate life and enjoy your time in the sun— and marvel at how these timeless jewels remain always dazzling, no matter what the season.

Now is the time to acquire a beautiful South Sea pearl strand of your own. The much anticipated Strand Sensation returns for the months of March to May at all Amethyst Boutiques. For details, call 870-3819 or visit www.pearlstar.com

A Jewelmer necklace with 18-golden Philippine South Sea pearls

How to make eyes appear bigger using makeup

CYMAITH doesn't have to mean small eyes

I HAPPEN to read your article on eyelashes and I'm just curious to try it for my upcoming graduation photos shoot. I use eyeglasses all the time and some people say I look different when I don't wear my eyeglasses.

I took a picture of myself without eyeglasses and I professed how I looked like when I'm wearing glasses because my eyes looked small...don't mind! lived without it. What do you think I should do for my graduation photo?

JEAN

While applying a healthy dose of mascara helps make lashes look longer and thicker, and wearing false eyelashes makes eyes appear bigger, eyeliners are the main ways to frame your face and bring focus to your eyes. Obviously, glasses were made so we can see better and some of us can't even function without it, but clearly, the right pair can make you look younger, more stylish and more put-together. This is why I get why you're so attached to your glasses, You've been wearing them for so long your friends probably don't recognize you without them, and you kind of become self-conscious when you're not wearing them.

The not nice if they will allow you to wear glasses for your graduation photo, but I suggest you go with what you're most comfortable in. Whether that means wearing your glasses or going without it, taking a good photo is all about confidence.

Oh that note, I also suggest you keep an open mind when it comes to wearing makeup since glasses. I pretty much have the same problem, being clumsy, and I once tried to make your eyes look bigger and brighter, especially for photos.

TRICKS OF THE TRADE

Kelly Misa

Now, the best way to approach this is to practice applying makeup or maybe have a professional makeup artist who understands the look you want (you don't want to look like a completely different person on your graduation photo). Leaving makeup up to chance, or practicing until the last minute probably won't end up as pretty as you want it. Practice makeup close to prelim, and like anything you learn on youtube, it'll take time and energy to be good at it.

Whether you choose to wear your glasses or not, it is always useful to know how to make your eyes look bigger using makeup. Listed below are my tried-and-tested tips on how to enhance, brighten or widen your eyes.

• Create a soft smoky eye. The best way to define those eyes is to use a matte brown eyeshadow in a shade like umber, mid-brown or coffee. This creates the illusion of deep-set eyes, making eyes appear bigger. To get that smoky eye right, apply the shadow from your lash line, blending outward (only just under your brow bone, eyes can look it, just follow the outline of your eye socket). The important thing here is to blend, blend, blend, until your eyeshadow subtly fades outwards. Using an eyeshadow brush will give you more application, and a blending brush will create harsh uneven lines.

• Use black waterproof liner. This takes some practice, but when done right makes the eyes pop. Gently rest your fingers to slightly open up your eye, using your upper lash line. Then using black or brown waterproof eyeliner, draw on the line closest to your lashes, being thin creates a clean line so when you apply mascara the base of your eyelashes are also dark.

• Apply multiple coats of mascara. Loads of mascara really give your eyes a wide-awake look, but not without curling those lashes. Move your lashes onto an eyelash curler at different points of your lashes so as to create a natural curve instead of a stiff line. Then apply two to three coats of volumizing mascara (one lengthening mascara if your eyelashes are already thick).

• Try wearing falsies. If you can't stand mascara, another option is to wear false eyelashes. The tricky part here is to find the right one. You don't want a pair that is too quirky or unnatural. You want falsies that are lash without looking too heavy, as these can cover your eyes or make them look closed.

Now, these usually come in an extra long size, so don't forget to measure them first on your eyes and cut accordingly before use; apply the falsies, and your eyelashes first to ensure it blends well with the extra strips. Then, using the base part of your eyeliners on the tip of the holder of one of your makeup brushes, lightly spread the glue on the falsies and apply on the top of your lash line. Just make the glue is still wet, pushing the falsies down to the root of your eyelashes. To be sure, add a coat of mascara to bring together your natural lashes with your falsies.

• Highlight. Using a soft, light-colored shimmery eyeshadow in beige, buff or light pearly shades, eyes brighter and gives it depth. Apply the shadow on top of your brow bone and on the inner corners of your eyes.

E-mail the author at ask-kelly@gmail.com

Quantity + quality with reasonable price tags

IT'S AN accepted trade off. When you want something of good quality you must be willing to shell out the cash.

If you choose to scrimp and buy groceries, be prepared for wrinkled regrets among those hard-earned or flimsy products which need us to replaced or replenished again soon. Not so with Watsons's in-house brands that combine quality with quantity and will come out cheaper than name brand.

They have their own laboratory and factory so they do not need to shell out extra money to pay the middle man.

Watsons's boasts of being able to match or even surpass the quality of the leading brand at a much lower cost. So for products we use up daily why not switch to their brand and save a bundle so we can set aside for a rainy day.

For their 108 anniversary some items are buy one-take one! Do go and take advantage.

MAKEOVER 911

Kinny Salas

Commonly on buy one-take one promo:

• 1,000-ml shower gel in Green Tea (my favorite), strawberry (but soft-er) or Peach scent at P249.75. So you actually get a whopping 2,000 ml for this price. Perfect for guest rooms or big families where it is unanimity to share bars of soap.

• 500-ml hand soap at P130, their best-selling item for disease prevention anti-viral for every sink in the house.

Almond and Milk is my favorite as it moisturizes as well as cleans with that soothing honey scent.

• Hair conditioners at 225ml, the perfect size of many for fresh breath, potent anti-septic bacteria killer. Makes my eyes water and mouth foam, when left for the full 30 sec-onds like the leading brand.

• 300-ml Extra-Shine Treatment Shine with Jasmine Extract at P129, may be used like an ordinary daily hair con-ditioner if left on for 60 seconds, or an intensive hair mask treatment once a week left on for anywhere between one to 20 minutes before rinsing off. Strengthens hair strands, loosens shine and prevents tangles. Stay away for used to shave legs and underarms in the shower to prevent nicks and cuts and add moisture to skin.

Ever cheap! What a steal!

• 18-cm Mini Dental Floss at P39 for those with very tight spaces between teeth does floss still get stuck though.

• Tiny gauze towelettes for P96, let them being simple it is ergonomically designed to wash face teeth and have gentle enough bristles to protect gums.

• 500-mg ascorbic acid at P160 for 100 per se percent ocids...cough and flu as well as boost immune system for over all health.

• Top seller: pack of three Soft Facial Tissues, P129 for 450 pulls. Use as all things as this and make even softer than the Kleenex's leading brands. No scratchy irritated noses or faces with this one.

The buy one-take one offer is a great until supplies last.

E-mail the author at kinnyv4@gmail.com

BROWNAUS Resurrection procedure

Top brow-raising problems . . .

From page D1

texture need some help when it comes to the brows. Here are some common problems and easy solutions:

• Wiry hair—A clean stroke of wax will work, but for those who have it, good, but the only real dilemma is wiry hair. The fastest way to get them out is by using a brow shaver, but I would not recommend this for sensitive since one may end up with sudden or growth. Also the hair gets darker and it grows fast, too.

Plucking can be a good option, but the best solution is having threading done. For one the sensitivities can even help shape your brows and the result is cleaner. It takes getting used to and you must maintain the shape by plucking regularly. Just so how it done for maintenance:

K-PALETTE Real Lasting Eyebrow Tattoo

Try: Threading at Emphasis Salon, Rockwell; 14 Salon, Greenbelt; Watsons; It's Us, Makati, tel. 0920. Stories.

• Eyelid lower—The is characterized by thick long brows that are unruly. Like a tumbleweed to comb your hair up. Use brow-trimming scissors and cut hair that extends above your natural brow line. Then use sharp-angled tweezers to pluck away hair under the arch. If you find tweezing painful, you may prefer to come the next you will be plucking by for-ceps, which is more precise and less time-consuming. If you're in a rush, apply honey to calm skin.

Try: Louis Master Stan-Grooming Scissors and Tweezers, stainless steel at angled tweezers.

• Overplucked brows—There was a time this brows were in, but nowadays thick full brows are back with a vengeance and the thin brow look is now considered over-plucked. To fix this, you'll have to fill those brows. Choose a color that matches your hair (one shade lighter would work, too) which will act like a shadow. A taupe shade works best on almost everybody. Most light colors are the best regardless of what kind of product you choose.

A brow brush should be your best friend. This will soften the appearance and will allow you to add on to thickness and hollow areas. Keep away from the sweeper as much as you can and allow your hair to grow. Be patient in filling in those holes and remember, her your hair will grow back in a couple of weeks; once fuller, the hair will be easier to shape.

Try: K-Palette Real Lasting Eyebrow Tattoo Over Day Tattoo. Available at Beauty Bar.

For those with sparse and mostly no brows. This was the problem of my friend And because of this reason why I am now writing his article. A friend asked her if she would do semi-permanent eyebrow tattoo (apparently it's supposed to last two years) and since she was desperate, she gave it a chance. After the procedure she nervously called to check it out and I was pleasantly surprised with the result. She looked like she had real brows since they did it in such a way that they drew in strands of hair.

Try: Eyebrow Resurrection 2-4 Insta Brownaus.

• Salt-and-pepper brows—Gray hair doesn't only appear on the head but are also on eyebrows. There are products that will not only keep your brows in place, but hide the gray.

Try: BMC's brow set, pick your shade.

Stila gets ready for spring

STILA INTRODUCES a new crop of spring essentials that will keep you gorgeous and glowing this upcoming fine season. In the Garden Eye Shadow Palette features delicate-inspired shades in a rose botanical palette. Smudge Crayon Makeup and Primer + Shadow + Liner in a multi-tasking crayon with a gel-based waterproof formula. Sparkle Lust Gloss is a luscious lipgloss infused with highly-pigmented, ultra-fine pearl.

Jewel Eye Shadow is a high-tech shadow that depends upon the sparkle. For best results, apply with Stila's new #14 Jewel Eye Shadow Brush.

The Stila Spring Collection is available in Stila counters in all Watsons Department Stores.

Strawberry reveals skin's natural radiance

Fruits & Passion has drawn on nature once again to create a new body care product line based on a core ingredient: strawberries.

Canada's pure-to-the-core strawberry is joining the Nourishing Collection to offer nature-lovers a heritage beer ingredient that is chock-full of vitamins that help bring out nature's natural radiance.

The delicately scented mother's Strawberry has a both comforting and energizing. The Shower Gel was developed with a brand new formula. The Strawberry Exfoliant is all-women and Fruits & Passion.

In the Philippines, Fruits & Passion is distributed by Rowes Specialists, Inc. in Greenbelt 3, Rockhaus High Street, Alabang Town Center, Rockhaus Town Shang-i-La Plaza, Midland Trinoma.

Fast-drying nail color for women on the go

Revlon introduces its Top Speed Fast Dry Nail Enamel has a revolutionary Quick-Fracture Formula that is designed to give gemstone with just one coat of polish. Its 60-count triangular bottles give one a smooth layer every time, one never have to worry about those bumpy, streaky and uneven coats ever again.

Revlon Top Speed Fast Dry Nail Enamel also has a built-in topcoat that gives one glossy shine with no extra drying power. And because it's free from harsh chemicals like toluene and toluene, it's gentle on the nails.

Revlon Top Speed Fast Dry Nail Enamel is available in 32 trendy new shades.

Exceptional styling when expecting

PREGNANCY IS a happy and joyful time, filled with the anticipations of your family's newest arrival, but carrying a child is also a time of many changes, both physical and emotional. As such, it can bring with it a roller coaster of emotions—from the delight of expecting, to anxiety over the physical changes and discomfort that comes with it.

It's not just the prohibited food that makes up a large chunk of the forbidden list, even shelling pretend up presents so many hindrances. Expecting moms, as I've heard one lovely sweet, even allowed to color their hair or go through chemical salon treatments. Even **mani-pedis should be avoided** because studies show that you absorb through your skin about 60 percent of whatever you put on it. Some of these things can be full of harsh chemicals that are bad for your overall health and especially your baby.

So, to pamper the one that needs it the most during the onset of summer, I accompanied a seven-month expecting mom to have a salon day. Her **mom, known as Bee Jamaser**, she knew the limitations of her son, but desperately needed to boost her self-esteem with a little pampering.

"It's so frustrating when my roots grow but neither can and I know I can't color my hair," she starts. While salon day for pregnant women has not yet been invented, we can still celebrate because there's an organic line that expecting moms can use. Invented by hair-care expert Ouidad, these four new products count. Tests your side in your hand.

This March, Ouidad takes the organic lifestyle to a whole new level through its Authentic Naturals product line. This luxurious organic line cherishes the value of skin nourishment, holistic setting and the practice of movement and meditation. The **line offers products that** are 98-100 percent made of **Natural Origin**, using only wild-crafted and organic ingredients, and, mostly sourced with sustainability.

To try them out, we visited **Basement Salon** in Shangri-La Plaza Intl. +632-6362222, where the success of its Power Plant branch, **Basement** has **hard to reach** by opening the Shangri-La branch—a standalone **structure in Shangri-La** malls carpark building. The salon offers a myriad of services such as haircutting, styling, hair treatment, manicure-pedi, makeup, hair removal packages and spa treatments. Heading the team is Stefan Villavendo, hailing from Manila as one of its pillars in hair styling.

In the salon, we tried the organic system of treatments for the body, hands and feet. Services last from **minutes** start at P1,195-P3,600, depending on the length of hair. My friend also had a haircut by the master stylist (P1,800). And while we waited for the hair to wash, we were given relaxing foot massages. The aroma from the essential oils and the carefully studied massage strokes definitely improved energy circulation throughout the body. At the end of the day, I felt energized from neck, and my friend, not so heavy with child. Just the aroma from the products surely helped mind and body relax. The essential oils in the ingredients helped to pamper the skin and rejuvenate the flow of energy in the body.

Ouidad's Authentic Naturals products are available for home use. Try Authentic Cleansing Nectar, P1,250; Authentic Moisturizing Oil, P1,875; Authentic Replenishing Butter, P1,950.

Heading down and out when you're pregnant is a common issue. Body image is of particular concern, and how you feel about your pregnant body will affect you. So give in to those indulgences during the nine months that you are with child. This is a good time to open the floodgates of narcissism, because the baby will want exactly what the mother feels. Remember to keep your beauty basic to natural products and save those cut for other days.

Looking for something to make you look rejuvenated from those sleepless nights? Try Neutrogena Drops of Youth from The Body Shop, it gives you a range of hydration and lush-starts your cell repair by the **Neutrogena's patented** process of replacing the uppermost dead cells with new ones formula. It's a botanical powerhouse that can be used in combination with serum or added to a moisturizer. Its ingredients are derived from natural origins, silicon and paraben-free, so you're assured that the product delivers natural beauty, naturally. Drops of Youth sells for P1,295 at The Body Shop.

Organic salon treats for expecting moms

Isabel Rocas

HIGH STYLE SUMMER@SM

MEET BRIGHT DAYS HEAD-ON WITH HIGH-IMPACT SHOES AND BAGS FROM THE SUMMER COLLECTION OF PARISIAN

Kick off to gorgeous getaways while making that particular "high" which summer fashion brings. Shake for the hot days trend packed by the best Shoes and Bags are Mine and boys in trends!

Want splash up and summer best wardrobe for your beloved? The latest lineup of wedges from Parisian raises every woman's style profile, what with the uber-fashionable and trendy shapes, tribal print or colorful wedge heels. Classic beauty inspired by French icons be fatally gorgeous out on the scene and making a splash of natural fashion specs wherever they may.

Parisian bags are both silly shapes and attention-grabbing at records. Tuned-in-colours or neutral hoops, we told us smart satchels that make even on a simplest summer wear look glitzyfun, are such sunglasses and clutches when you bask under the sun this season.

As the temperatures soar, expect to sizzle in style with the high-impact, signature summer collections of shoes and bags from Parisian.

LIFESTYLE Fashion&Beauty

Gawad Kalinga going into fashion

It's eyeing products that make sustainability and nationalism accessible, relevant and within reach of the stylish set

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE, surrounded, nationalism—these are concepts and ideologies that were once seen as extreme and exclusive to tree-hugging movements.

Social enterprises were once misunderstood as exploitative in nature. Sustainable fashion was seen as conceptual, not wearable. Organic products were scarce and not satisfying. Wearing Filipino brands used to be frowned on today is not stylish.

In recent years, there has been a stark shift in mindset. All of these have now become popular advocacies. If not the gold standards of some, profitability among the youth. Groups have made media and consultations around these issues.

Internationally acclaimed social enterprise Bag2Work, known for working with Parañaque communities to transform flour rugs to practical pieces, has made sprouting and women empowerment a strong driver in their company's growth. Closely respected when covetable, stylish products made of recycled woven fabrics can be produced.

GAWAD KALINGA

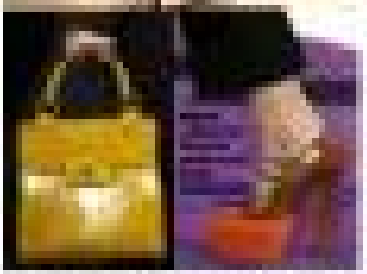
Loren shares her passion with the public–indigenous textiles

By Charles V. Plead

TWO GALLERIES showcasing the country's rich weaving and textile traditions opened this week at the Metropolitan Museum.

"Hibla ng Lahing Filipino: Textiles and Philippine Textile Gallery" aims to highlight the commonalities of the country's 110 ethnolinguistic groups through shared indigenous weaving technologies, and it was an initiative of Sen. Loren Legarda, chair of the Senate Committee on Cultural Communities.

bench/
• Aldo • Bench • Bench Body • B/Tweeners • Call It Spring • CC-00 • Celio • Charles and Keith • CPS • Dimensione • Early Learning Center • F&X • Human • Kashieca • La Senza • Lyn • Mothercare • Patchi • Pedro • Pinoylab • The Face Shop • Tofu

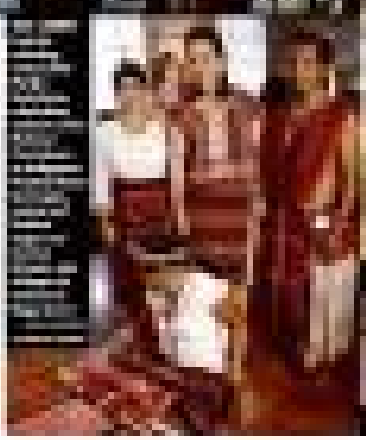


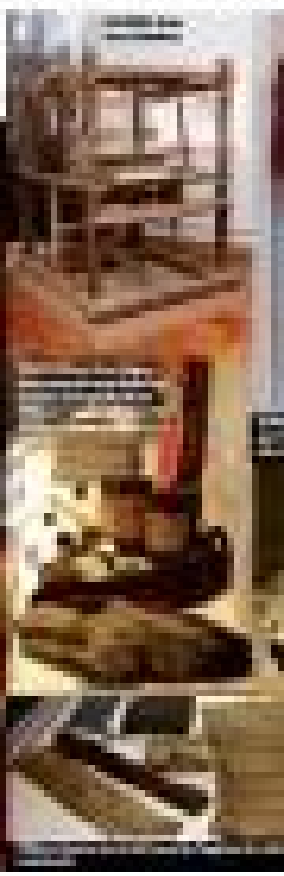
Italian superbrands get nostalgic

At Milan Fashion Week, it was about 70s chic, '90s grunge, Lauren in the '80s, and old Hollywood

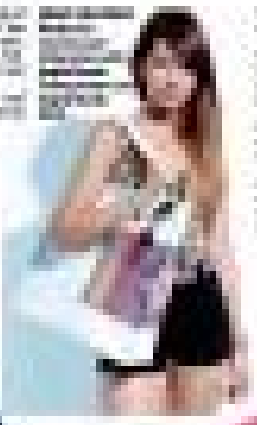
Loren shares her passion with the public–indigeno

Rare exhibit shows her collection and those of private collectors, showcasing the weaving technology of 130 ethnolinguistic groups





Gawad Kalinga going into fashion



...us textiles

Ateneo Law School graduates 100% in 2011 Bar exams

TITANIUM AND INTEGRATED JURY ANNOUNCED BOB BILLY HAMED IURY RESIDENT

SHOPWISE

Savory Seas

The Fresh Seafood Bash
March 23 to April 12, 2012

Delight in fresh seafood and have your fresh catch cooked on the spot in our Fish Fry and Kilawin station. Catch up to 20% discount on select seafoods everyday.

Seasons of Flavor

SHOPWISE

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PLUS! Enjoy FREE food sampling and games all day long.

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LIFESTYLE Fashion&Beauty

New perfume evokes adventure and wanderlust

Hermès releases travel-inspired new scent

VOYAGE d'Hermès Parfums

SINCE 1837, Hermès has drawn on the world of nature and horses, then on the requirements of travelers, as its sources of fashion inspiration.

Following the theme of travel is Voyage d'Hermès Parfum.

Like an amplified echo on the "woody fresh musk" theme of the original fragrance, Voyage d'Hermès Parfum reveals itself as an amber signature, with a generosity apparent from the very first notes.

Making the heart of the composition an irresistibly irresistible, lively spice combines with supple woods in a subtle alchemy of amber touches mixed with unprecedented tones of rose.

The bottle designed by Philippe Mouquet is timeless. A key emblem of the house, a Hermès saddle lock marks the bottle's center of gravity and the core of its stability, as well as its axis of movement.

NEWS PA

Braids and pink puckers: The summer 2012 beauty-trend report

The beauty world's giants recap key trends at P&G's annual Beauty Debate in Singapore

VIVIENNE Westwood played with braids for Spring/Summer 2012 runways

By Reena Capili Bonifacio
Contributor

FROM THE runways of Paris, New York and Milan, the beauty world's giants recapped the four key trends of Spring/Summer 2012 at Procter & Gamble's annual Beauty Debate. The trends celebrate femininity and the woman, expressed differently, through it's androgynous look from last season.

Held at Capella Hotel in Singapore, the three-day event kicked off with a forecast by global director for trends and innovation Nathalie Peltrisa, followed by a photo presentation with Procter & Gamble ambassador and renowned hair stylist Sam McKnight.

That was followed by a report by Nelly Prudhomeaux, global creative director. Beginner feminism and Irish Mood, who created the hair styles for the runways. Fashion director Ismael Reny staged a multi-sensorial mood show of nine models.

A sweet and slightly bemused look, a strong sense of confidence, an natural beauty and supernatural colors made up the Spring/Summer 2012 beauty look.

BEAUTY PA

members' exclusive

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PUGAD BABOY BY PHILJUNGOB

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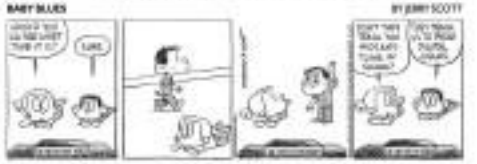

RIKO MACHINE BY PAWIK ABRERA

SEIN BY DANIEL SHELTON

HUTTS BY PATRICK MCDONNELL

SHERMAN'S LAGOON BY JIM TOOMEY

DILBERT BY STEVE KELLEY AND JEFF PARKER

TULDOK BY MARA COLI

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCES DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY You love life and the large variety of people in the world. You're also generous and understanding. You encourage others and pride yourself on your tact and diplomacy. Your birthday falls on the cusp of Aries and Taurus, which gives you a strong love of children. Work hard to attain a successful career that is challenging and rewarding. Birthdate of: Jerry Lewis, actor; Princess Eugenie, U.K. royal; Anne Rochester, film director.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) Get used to delays, setbacks and open up to communication. Plans are stalled or you're not getting the information you need. Be careful what you say. Misinterpretation is stalled on the road to financial complications.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) You have considerable support coming your way. Get out and network. Whatever someone you're looking for will be quite easy to find — you should know this.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) Take opportunities to run into old friends. After all, it's good to have a family with whom you can relate and be supported.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) Expect to run into issues from the past or encounters you might not have seen for a while. That's because there's a reason that going on with an family figure from in your past. Mind it!

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22) Unanticipated might be delayed or misunderstood now. Wait for others instead to higher culture. Don't be surprised if you're not treated like the best creature and you have been.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22) Confer with experts related to educational, legal, debt, shared property and writing. You can also study with others. Discuss your intuitive choices and you can't go wrong.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) Your personal life is in the spotlight now. Be careful what you say and how you say it. Don't be overly sensitive to criticism. Discuss your intuitive choices and you can't go wrong.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) Old flames and relatives or partners are back in your life again. Look good, behave well and be the best version.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) Get home and check in on the situation again. This could be motivated for some of you, but for most this will a pretty pattern. You have my number.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19) Relations products are changed on your doorstep, changing circular paths and setting you out of home and home. Some other hand you might be the one changing your plans. Be alert!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18) Other voices have been wrong, because the positions Mercury retrograde will take its toll on you. Expect transportation breakdowns and anxious moments in between.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20) If you're looking for work, or have your horoscope. Relationships where you worked on. Now, it's you might have to return to a previous environment.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that each row, column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. For more programs or www.sudoku.com

Answers to yesterday puzzle

4	9	5	6	1	8	7	3	2
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8	2	7	3	5	4	6	9	1
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2	4	6	5	3	7	8	1	9
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Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

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Difficulty Level ★★★★

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS

1. Hungry wanderer
6. Agreement
10. Ancient container
14. Speak to a crowd
15. Ancient
16. Country code for Finland
17. Aunt, Parisienne &
18. Dolly by nature or concept
19. Fourth Gospel
20. Fruit native to Colombia
22. Lunch
23. Jumbo
24. Commandment
25. Harrison Ford
26. Whales, sharks and tuna
28. Cleaning cloth
29. Good spot for a big date
32. Bear's Cavern
33. Cleaning cloth
34. Hospital administration
36. Ancient Egypt
37. Pro-Israel
38. Endeavor
39. Fine-tuning
40. Pre-arranged meetings
41. Private conversations
42. Bring to a halt
43. Ancient Greek
44. Pre-Columbian
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ANTONI and Gia Ramos, Migs Rosales and Pepsie Elige

PENNY and Oli Laporte

ALEX Enad, Cristina Co

ELITE Gutierrez, Jessica Serrano, Leah de Guzman

JUN DANCAM, Aileen Co, Mercedes-Benz Execs

HARVEY Pantoncan (center) with daughters Michelle (left) and Tina, chef-restaurateur behind El Nacional's Italian restaurant and bar

HEIDI Ng, Miriam Quiambao

CODADHE TYDADHE, Michelle Pantoncan and Geoffrey Morgan in Ibiza

PATRICK Reyno, Marvel Crespo, Pury Hupmanscutt, Paulo Campos

JUNJUNDE de Leon, Ivee Cabarrus

Italian food hub in Manila; Crystal Ball in Cebu

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Interview by Aileen Gan Magpoc
powered by MAYBELLINE MAC COSMETICS

Photos by Aileen Gan Magpoc

CHEF TINA Pantoni is there a limit to what she will not do to celebrate the one day she can chill out with her close pals. The Instagram-obsessed restaurateur was minus her chef's outfit and wore a stunning Herve Leger dress at her very own Dependence, Discoteca's new fine lounge, dahlings.

Discoteca was packaged in a whole new mood and atmosphere, put together by design consultant Miguel 'Migs' Rosales, no less.

With a rustic approach to a new Italian menu and a hip DJ-and-live-band mix, which opened its doors this month, Discoteca is now a mix of various and varied moments, making it a comfortable and cool setting to enjoy your meals together, with a lot of classic and memorable cocktails, concoctions, yummy antipasto and Italian tapas.

Now on its second term, Discoteca Ristorante Italiano has become a favorite destination of people with discerning palates and those who know what excellent cuisine are all about, pulongges.

Discoteca Ristorante Italiano is at 207 Nicanor Garcia St. (formerly Arnaiz), Brgy. Bel-Air, Makati City. Call 8998810/19, e-mail lyanne.rosario@gmail.com, visit www.bcm.ph.

Zee's Crystal Ball

After happening two Zee Lifestyle's grand Crystal Ball held at the 300-seated Rainbow Ski Hotel in Cebu. It was co-sponsored by Smirnoff and IMDC.

Eye-catching socialite Margarita Young came in a chic Little Black Dress. She arrived with Gov. Gwen Garcia who wore a chic tuxedo and gown by Cary Rodriguez.

Pretty pioneer and interior designer Vonnie Manchanda and Pink Mona's Philip Chang, both in Amy Gonzalez gowns, created the crystal candelabra-themed ballroom.

It was a positively magical evening which started at the lobby where the cheerful entrance apparel their chilled Veuve Clicquot champagne while cocktails were passed around, pulongges.

Meanwhile, a performance by pre-eminent Vince Lahoz and lounge singer Tita Rowena had all in full attention.

There was a mind-boggling seven-course dinner prepared by the hotel's Persian-born consultant chef, Marvin Amorosa, and a gala fashion show by Cebu's avant designers presented by SM Accessories, best of wishes.

In the end, guests got up at around 3 a.m. from their exhaustion after wining and dining on the dance floor to the sounds of the DJs of Rainbow.

At Prive

If you're fashion-forward, the place to dash to on The Index is the chi-chi Prive Luxury Club, which will hold a fashion show this day. Recently, presented was "Unforgettable" and taking center stage was Sept of Ministry of Wedding, the world's first concept wed show.

Soup wound up with Pesado for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (Peta) for the latter's ad campaign against the use of fur in fashion and accessories. The message is simple: "Fur is ugly, and fur is absolutely unforgivable."

The show had fashion photographer Miguel Miranda presenting some of my favorite assistants of the season captured wearing close to nothing but dazzling bling, bags and accessories by Marlon Guarino, Gabriel Mendl, Nicole Wilson-Isaac, Jesse Makkabi, Tennessee by Solomon, and Princess Rosario. All were styled by Gerrick Ortiz, no less.

Night ends and tenalita hours were welcomed by Cat and Peter sessions, my pulongges JM Rodriguez. The grand happening also had a fashion show by Pendolista, the gorgeous Maggie Wilson-Coronel's darling watercolor line, dahlings.

From Jan. 13 until March 31, Soup will donate P50 to Pink for every Brazilian wax treatment done. First-time customers will get a discount, too! It's a good cause supporting the anti-fur movement, di ba, pulongges?

Aileen Gan? Call Cyanne on 0917.8988161, visit www.pendolistaclub.com, former advertising exec/Club, and become a fan of Pete Luxury Global on Facebook.

GERI Di Ortiz, Monique Lhuillier, Ivee Zamora

MARIO Dy, Mich Rich, Tony Toni, Gen YE

SAMPLE Smith, Kuja Purcell, Pia Ayesa, Jeny Head-King, Christa Cadoco, Kit Barrogaza in Wonderbra swimwear

JaCAR Wederman and Tricia Gallaza in Philippe Tampers, Jose Dallas Pizza Jose Bracelets

ZEE Magazine fashion honorees Lou Rabagoon in her own Louie label, Tessa Valdes in Rosanni Exotic, Zoe Salcon also in Oj Nolet

RUFFLES Ernest and Majed Miranda, Jay Jarlov and Eldo Robles, Rahel Dayaal and Ilja, Dianne Dee and Jason Rabes

BONNIE Moritz, Mel Mesa, Eva Bello, Katie Woolbright, Carlos Salud

ELEN Hilao, Maryann Zarraffa, Mahayana Frangio a-ria Chanel, Annabelle Lim-ico Philip Rodrigues, Scottish Inn-ia Cary Santiago, Ina Zabala, Lolet Heruela

LOUIE Yuvael, Jose Lukaut, Ken Jurnara, Erik Escollante, Mon Gan

JOSE Columbus, Calvin Calzado Gan, Clarissa Chiongbian, Martin Ledesma

CEBU Gov. Gwen Garcia, Mara Jose, Eric Recalde

HENRY Wilson, Jovie Gindonar, Tomio Bautista

MIA and Chris Aldaguer, Jill Aldaguer

WIL TYSWAYL Jacqueline Lhuillier in Monique L., Pinky Chong, Tessie Manansala

ANA IGPIT, Rico King, Agnes Monreal, Cookie Bernad

Braids and pink puckers: The summer ...

From page F1

Petrea's list of four key trends and how to get them:

Visible scars

Inspired by: air and light, and well-being of mind, body and spirit. It has an ethereal, young quality, much like the Louis Vuitton girly hair and makeup combo of loose up-do to hair lined with fresh black and lip-shadow plus thick eyelashes.

Hairwear: At Moisture Westwood Gold Label, hair had random braids pinned in place. McKnight said it's all about child-like romance and naivete. Hair has movement.

Get it: Make sure hair is clean and fresh, and has one or two loose braids. "Blow-dry your hair, take one element from the show like a braid or twist, and make it your own," said McKnight. Mix some white in your eye makeup or light blues for that airy and light quality, as was done at Rosy's trend show.

Tings

Inspired by: Latin influences, black lace and embroidery. New sophisticated and strong and confident femininity with pink as key color. Think modern Carmen. For the ladies who love a single strong statement, this is for you.

Hairwear: Paco Rabanne's statement pompadour up front, and a flowing, moving, long ponytail bone behind.

Get it: Soukleman said to go for "intermittent, one piece of color in exactly the right place, which makes you look more modern." Find the perfect pink Sorbets lipstick this summer and pair with precisely-lined black eyelids. Or if it's cold drunk is too-cute-to-be, pair your make-up with darker hair color for some drama.

Sand dunes

Inspired by: nature, its rich, natural colors and fluidity. "This is the first time we see such an elegant, luxurious and respectful interpretation of nature, compared to what we've seen," said Petrea. It is about eco-chic, noble simplicity and understated luxury. Soukleman and Wood described that look as "hypernatural," and it is the epitome of the no-make-up-makeup-look: au naturel hair color.

Hairwear: "It's really the return to luxury, not conventionally, but something that's incredibly glamorous. The hair at BMW was actually done, but it doesn't feel done," said Soukleman. "It's the anti-big blowdry! It doesn't look like we can't touch it. It's lush in premium condition," Wood said.

The overall hair trend, McKnight said, is natural, healthy, shiny and glossy hair.

Get it: While the blondes from the runways got a fresh dose of color, it didn't look it. Make sure your summer color isn't too far away from your natural hair color, and that it doesn't contrast. "I get my hair done" — the do-for-natural comes in your make-up, from eye-opening bronzer to peachy blushes and lipsticks, and even a bit of bronzer. It's how your mom wants your makeup to look if he had one.

Beauty graffiti

Inspired by: fun and color, celebrating creativity, individuality and spontaneity. McKnight said think of the young hip-rock chick in the music festival. It is free-spirited, modern and artistic. For mature women, proceed with caution or in small doses.

Hairwear: Dhipavalli's "Festival Glamour" theme fashion show had models donning the classic long, wavy hair smothered in "mane-sheik indie-chicks" made wear with a shot of color in their hair. Hair is stylish but un-styled, said McKnight.

Get it: Maybe the lowest-maintenance hair trend of all, this can be seen by "washing and conditioning your hair, and letting it dry naturally," McKnight advised. If your hair is stick-straight, add some waves with a curling iron, and if you're feeling playful, add a pop of color. Pick up an eyeshadow palette you normally skip at counters, like turquoise, green or purple, and match with your bold lip in red, bright pink, or the pantone of the year, tangerine tango. Or just try adding color to either your eye or lip makeup.

FIND your perfect lipstick for cool-toned lips.

ADD a pop of color through your eye makeup this summer.

New perfume evokes adventure and wanderlust

From page F1

The silver-colored energy is set around a bottle in black glass, a color synonymous with depth and investing, establishing with refinement and sobriety its new relationship with the precious metal. On the chevron-patterned canvas case, the emblematic ribbon in new slim black, said is highlighted with the word "Perfume."

Home perfumer Jean Claude Ellena said Voyage d'Hermès Perfume moved away "from the principle of the hermès's women, women' and instead instead to the intensity of perception and the extent of its village.

"I wanted to maintain the contrast between the invigorating spicy freshness of the top notes and the reassuring gentleness of herded by the sun de milieu's heart and its village," he explained.

"Because the idea was to amplify fill out and deepen the volume of the original fragrance, I reduced the citrus aspect of the top notes to get to the quick of the subject more instantly.

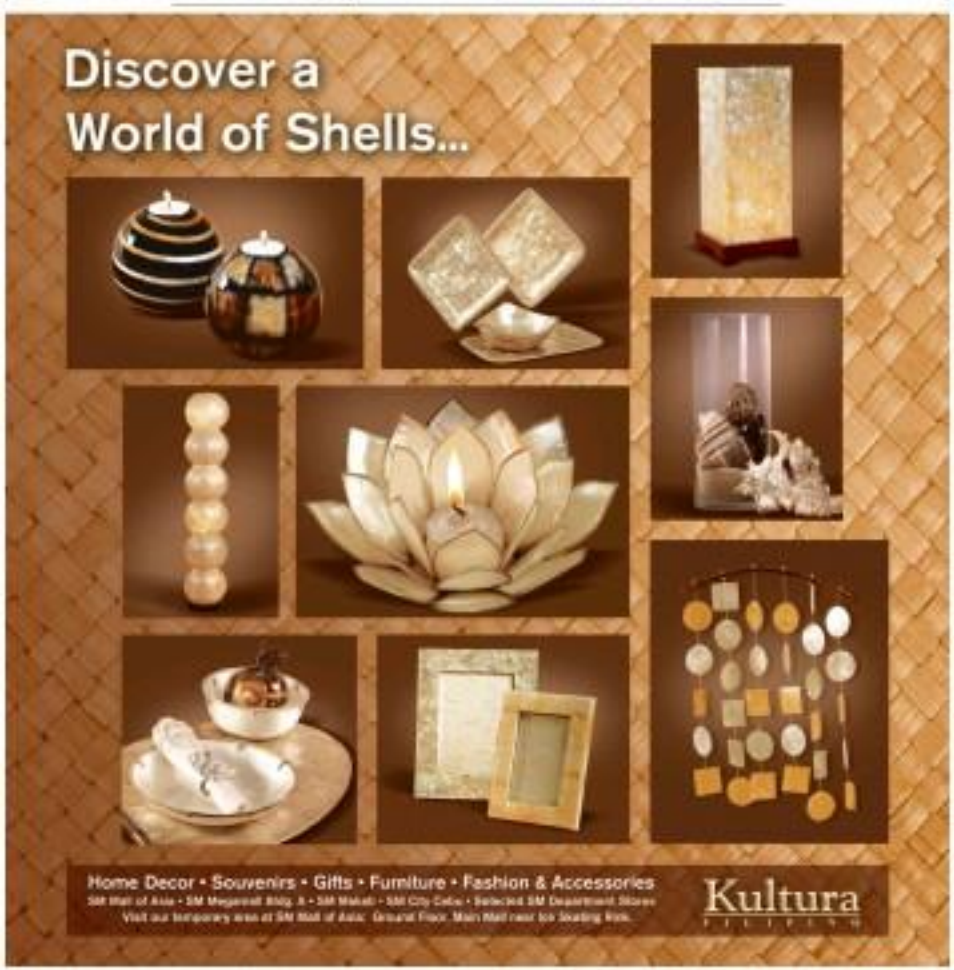
Asked what olfactory perceptions he was looking for, Ellena replied, "Even more morning, even warm others... A more marked and long-lasting presence... An 'expanding wounded feel' is distinct from the drawn-out, sour aspect of the sun de milieu, as if achieving a new olfactory dimension.

"If you transposed it into the world of textiles, the perfume would be like cashmere or wool, while the eau de toilette would suggest fabrics such as linen or cotton," Ellena added.

Perfume has been an integral part of Hermès's history since the 1930s.

The perfumers draw their inspiration from the heritage of Hermès. Calèche, Equipage and more recently Eau des Merveilles, Terre d'Hermès and Voyage d'Hermès have been among the most notable Hermès scents.

Also well known are Hermès' Garden Series and Paris Perfumes.



2bU LIFESTYLE

'Guerillas' for heroism and art

UP College of Fine Arts students create indie comics and graffiti art inspired by Pinoy superheroes for the everyday Juan

By Jodee Agoncillo

THE DICTIONARY defines "gerilya" as an irregular armed force, people engaged in or experienced in warfare. They are the bad guys, the thieves, and the rebels for a cause.

But five artist artists, who call themselves Gerilya, gave the word new meaning as they recently launched a graffiti exhibit in Kanto Gallery at The Collective in Makati.

Universe of the Philippines (UP) College of Fine Arts students Jonas Gonzalez, Hiro Zapanta and Hero Villarete, all graphic artists of Philippine Collegian, the university's official publication, and Nolpi Lantion, and Mynkarlla Villalon, Collegian's forum features editor, comprise Gerilya.

Their first collective project, the Gerilya Komiks, "flagship indie comics about the everyday life of heroes, became an instant hit on the College of Fine Arts.

They were found inspiration on the streets—a place closer to ordinary people, a medium that renders a subtle undertone—and gave birth to "Pinoy Bangon: Mandirigmang Ednobaryo: Tawid ng

GRAFFITI culture to the Philippines in "Diyang, Pasyonate at Religious Rangers" Hub No. 1

Color me pretty

Cardi crazy

Pastel palettes

Paint your summer with pretty colors, sweet florals and dainty lace for the perfect '50s kitsch diner redux

Music man

Raymund Marasigan shares his creative space with 2bU and talks about things that inspire him

THE BASEMENT makes for a rehearsal studio for his bands

RAYMUND Marasigan strikes what he loves most—making music

'Guerillas' for heroism and art

"FINEST Rangers" graffiti at Philcoa overpass

From page B1

Kasambahan." The series features the concept of the famous Power Rangers.

First seen in 2011, a wall set made up of silhouette poses showed faces of guerillas covered with veil and flags, their formation resembling the popular sources of Power Rangers, Sun Goddess Mariatin, and Darna of "Ghost Fighters." It also entered a side of Philcoa overpass. That was Bonifacio Day.

In this case, the graffiti, mostly seen as an eyesore, communicated a different meaning. To make their work more recognizable and relevant, Gerilya would put graffiti during historic events, such as the birthday of Andres Bonifacio. "In some ways, it's a tribute to Katipunerong," says Lumbres.

Their first graffiti dealt with legendary, mythological and underworld creatures like aswang and sitbilang. "We do some art to inspire story-telling and initiate public discussions, be it about the old and the young," says Lumbres.

Gerilya aims to preserve culture and instill awareness by bring awareness to kids, thanks to a youthful attack, without neglecting depth and creativity.

"FUSION Diaries ng Magdiwang at Magiliw Rangers"

MALDY Lumbres, Nico Villareal, Jayno Gonzales and Nico Zaparola

Childhood experience

Gerilya's artwork was built from a collective childhood experience. Growing up in the '90s, Gonzales recounts playing ninja, wrestling and imagining himself as superman. The group was very much into Shonen manga and Super Sentai, a Japanese superhero genre.

But their artwork goes beyond the more popular anime stances. "One mind set, who are the real Power superheroes here? Aren't they the Katipuneros who fought for us, the reason we are free?" Gonzales explains. The audience may be captivated by the popular stances, but the flag-bearer would point to the real heroes, he added.

The artwork involved ample research. When Gerilya did the Power Rangers collection, they researched on the Katipunan, for the accuracy of the flag details. There was, however, no intention to explain the evolution of the flags.

They even studied the dynamics of the pieces: What goes together, the colors, former art might not be clear up, greatest compared to other popular motifs, but Gerilya believes it's not as tame, subtle and irrelevant as some people think, either.

They tried to play up symbolism, like the potential fusion of the Magdiwang and Magkaibi, and what could have happened in history had the two groups teamed up.

"Working with images and symbolism is something we learned in the Collegian," Gonzales says. Let the image be striking and allow the audience to decipher the meaning. The group claimed they carried it in the business of speculating.

What binds them, more than their skills, is the joy they experience every time they are about to do something they think is "cool."

A vision to create

Villareal said they don't have any vision or mission, like a typical organization does. Their is a vision to create, but their motivation mainly is to enjoy what they do, he said. Their work, they claim, is not out for profit, though their graffiti art is for sale. "Nag-e-enjoy lang (slogan kami sa pinagawa nomin)," adds Lumbres.

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"Nagpa'l mo idea, suggestion, tulay para sa ang pagpapasiyahan ang bubuting and mayor'ng tuloy-tuloy—from your friends, your teammates and co-artists. Open up and enjoy."

Music man

From page G4 to Chenaquette.

Top 5 movies: "An American Werewolf in London," "Out of Sight," "Exit Through the Gift Shop," "The Lord of the Rings," "Moonraker."

Top 5 books: "The Judas Tree" by Joseph Wambaugh, "Kidnapped" by Robert Newsinger, "The Tipping Point" by Malcolm Gladwell, "Roommate" by Jimmy Webb. I recently read the (three) "Dragon Tattoo" books by Stieg Larsson (before the movie was in cinemas).

Music you know me: I'm a bit jazz, but I just got into dubstep after catching some local DJs in X-Side, Malakí. Recently, I've also been heavily playing the Black Keys, Yeah, Jay-Z/Kanye, Justice, The Social Network soundtrack, Gary Clark's and Tom Waits.

5 Favorite websites: I don't surf a lot. I mostly just e-mail.

When you're not busy with work, what do you do in your free time? Bike.

If you were to choose a different job, what would it be? If I had the skills, I think it would be pretty cool to be a tattoo artist, or a bartender. You get to meet cool people almost anywhere in the world.

If you can have any superpower, what would it be? Siri Dolores hears everyone with Clorox, so I'd settle for a selfie detangler.

What is the biggest problem of the world right now? Illiteracy.

What do you think is the solution? Education.

What's the most important life lesson you've learned so far? There are no shortcuts.

Most inspiring statement/sentiment (heard/said/read): It's not music, nor policies, are the markers of our lives.

SANDWICH

An Oblation Run in Mindanao to protect the environment

After a two-year hiatus, the Oblation Run is back for a cause–rowdy boys and girls, painted birthday suits and all

By Jean Rainen Boga
Contributor

MY FIRST visit to school since graduation day last year had to be about naked men running.

I traveled all the way from Davao's downtown area to Matina, Tugbok district (where the University of the Philippines is) to witness the Alpha Phi Omega (APO) Oblation Run because, surprisingly I have never experienced it during my five-year stay in college.

The return of the UP tradition this year was intriguing and interesting, because for the past three years, it wasn't held because of the university's student affairs committee. The last Oblation Run was in 2009.

I missed it because I was asleep in my dorm room. I awoke to hear a bunch of girls screaming outside, and when I thanked to see, the parade of birthday suits had already passed.

But forward to this year, when the activity was hyped on Facebook and Twitter by some UP Mindanao students.

I just had to witness the event.

Crowded

An unusually crowded university action was the first thing I saw. Students who would normally go home on Fridays for the weekend stayed behind for the run.

A semicircular path was created in the atrium for the runners. Students, boys and girls alike, stood by its circumference, like fence waiting for their prey.

A TV crew had to camera in the ready, but APO advised them (and the rest of the audience) to limit their video/photo coverage to the upper bodies of the runners. That also meant limiting my trigger-happy camera.

Everyone seemed excited. A bunch of rowdy boys was jokingly shaming the streamline would be pain. Some girls were already rolling out their wares to start, and when it did, they remembered on the Katipunan, for the accuracy of the flag details. There was, however, no intention to explain the evolution of the flags.

They even studied the dynamics of the pieces: What goes together, the colors, former art might not be clear up, greatest compared to other popular motifs, but Gerilya believes it's not as tame, subtle and irrelevant as some people think, either.

They tried to play up symbolism, like the potential fusion of the Magdiwang and Magkaibi, and what could have happened in history had the two groups teamed up.

"Working with images and symbolism is something we learned in the Collegian," Gonzales says. Let the image be striking and allow the audience to decipher the meaning. The group claimed they carried it in the business of speculating.

What binds them, more than their skills, is the joy they experience every time they are about to do something they think is "cool."

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STUDENTS gathered to watch the annual Oblation Run in Davao City on the UP campus.

From page B1

Kasambahan." The series features the concept of the famous Power Rangers.

First seen in 2011, a wall set made up of silhouette poses showed faces of guerillas covered with veil and flags, their formation resembling the popular sources of Power Rangers, Sun Goddess Mariatin, and Darna of "Ghost Fighters." It also entered a side of Philcoa overpass. That was Bonifacio Day.

In this case, the graffiti, mostly seen as an eyesore, communicated a different meaning. To make their work more recognizable and relevant, Gerilya would put graffiti during historic events, such as the birthday of Andres Bonifacio. "In some ways, it's a tribute to Katipunerong," says Lumbres.

Their first graffiti dealt with legendary, mythological and underworld creatures like aswang and sitbilang. "We do some art to inspire story-telling and initiate public discussions, be it about the old and the young," says Lumbres.

Gerilya aims to preserve culture and instill awareness by bring awareness to kids, thanks to a youthful attack, without neglecting depth and creativity.

Childhood experience

Gerilya's artwork was built from a collective childhood experience. Growing up in the '90s, Gonzales recounts playing ninja, wrestling and imagining himself as superman. The group was very much into Shonen manga and Super Sentai, a Japanese superhero genre.

But their artwork goes beyond the more popular anime stances. "One mind set, who are the real Power superheroes here? Aren't they the Katipuneros who fought for us, the reason we are free?" Gonzales explains. The audience may be captivated by the popular stances, but the flag-bearer would point to the real heroes, he added.

The artwork involved ample research. When Gerilya did the Power Rangers collection,

"FUSION Diaries ng Magdiwang at Magiliw Rangers"

MALDY Lumbres, Nico Villareal, Jayno Gonzales and Nico Zaparola

Krispy Kreme Celebrates 75 Years of Confectionery Goodness

Krispy Kreme is turning 2012 into a one big birthday celebration!

For a brand that's been known to put a smile on everyone's faces since they opened, it's hard to imagine they could still find a new reason for people to do so 75 years later.

But this is Krispy Kreme we are talking about. And as it opens more doors across the nation to share its confectionery goodness, could be hard-pressed to find an unsmiling face anticipating their much-loved treats and waiting expectantly for their newest flavors.

Indeed, the world's favorite doughnut and coffee brand has come a long way. From its humble beginnings as a local shop that sells hot-off-the-line melt-in-your-mouth doughnuts in Winston-Salem, Krispy Kreme has now become an international brand whose name speaks of a distinct experience that's simply magical—offering a wider variety of premium products that's sure to satisfy every foodie's craving.

And as its 75th year, there's no stopping Krispy Kreme, as they go full throttle in sharing the gift of joy to everyone.

More ways to enjoy Krispy Kreme

True to the brand's spirit of gratitude to all those who continue to support them, Krispy Kreme continues to expand its reach in the name of satisfying the cravings of doughnut and coffee aficionados across the country. Simply put—more locations means more magical moments for more people.

"We just opened our second store in South Metro in Alabang Town Center. And we're slated to open several more in key locations like in SM Cebu and Harbor Square in Roxas Boulevard," shares Carolyn Salud, Krispy Kreme's Managing Director. "These new locations will show our customers how much we take what they say seriously. Every week, we continue to get emails from different people in different locations across the country, asking for a Krispy Kreme store in their area. And these messages are actually what drives us to open a store in these locations."

Making it easier for everyone to enjoy their favorite Krispy Kreme treat, the new stores will also feature a new fun design for the brand that reflects its humble roots, as well as emphasizes its message of sharing to all.

"The opening of our first two stores in Cebu last year was a confirmation that we did the right thing by listening to our customers," adds Salud. "And until today, Cebu remains to be one of our biggest markets."

Krispy Kreme Goes National

Using as fans as the main driving force for the brand's growth, Krispy Kreme started its national expansion late last year when it opened — much to an overwhelming response — two stores in Cebu.

Located in IT Park and Ayala Center, Cebu, the debut of the two stores saw the brand's much-awaited entry into one of the country's regional and historical hubs.

"We've always known that there's a demand for Krispy Kreme to go to Cebu and other parts of the country," shares Salud. "But still, the kind of response that we got from there shocked us."

This year, Krispy Kreme continues to extend its national footprint as it gears up to go further south, by opening two stores in Davao.

Opening in Abreeza Mall and SM Davao, Krispy Kreme's newest treat to all Dabawenyos is a testament to the brand's carbon it takes to sharing its joy of experiences with as many people as possible.

"We have a lot to be thankful about. Krispy Kreme's entry into Cebu — an entirely different market — showed very favorable results for us. Thanks to their warm acceptance of the brand, we were able to gather enough courage to try Davao as well," adds Salud.

Fresh creations

It's not really a Krispy Kreme celebration without the brand's world-class creations.

For this year, Krispy Kreme is slated its release a string of exciting new and comeback products that's not just meant to make shared moments extra special, but celebrate some of the season's important holidays we have, including the brand's special egg-shaped Easter Doughnuts, Rose-shaped Mother's Day Doughnuts, and wicked Halloween Doughnuts.

"We at Krispy Kreme always strive to improve the experiences that our customers get whenever they visit our stores," explains Salud. "We continue to challenge ourselves to come up with fun, creative, and unique ways to make our guests feel more special, whether it be through our products, our services, promos, or our stores."

But Krispy Kreme's not just about doughnuts. As early as late last year, the brand already started releasing some of its new treats for everyone with its 75th birthday calendar.

"Since 2012 is our 75th birthday, we're also launching our line of limited-edition 75th birthday merchandise as a special treat to all our favorites, including our specially-designed 75th birthday tin cans, mugs, and t-shirts," adds Salud.

Sharing the Gift of Joy

As part of its 75th birthday campaign, Krispy Kreme is also making it easier for everyone to help more people with its Share the Gift of Joy campaign.

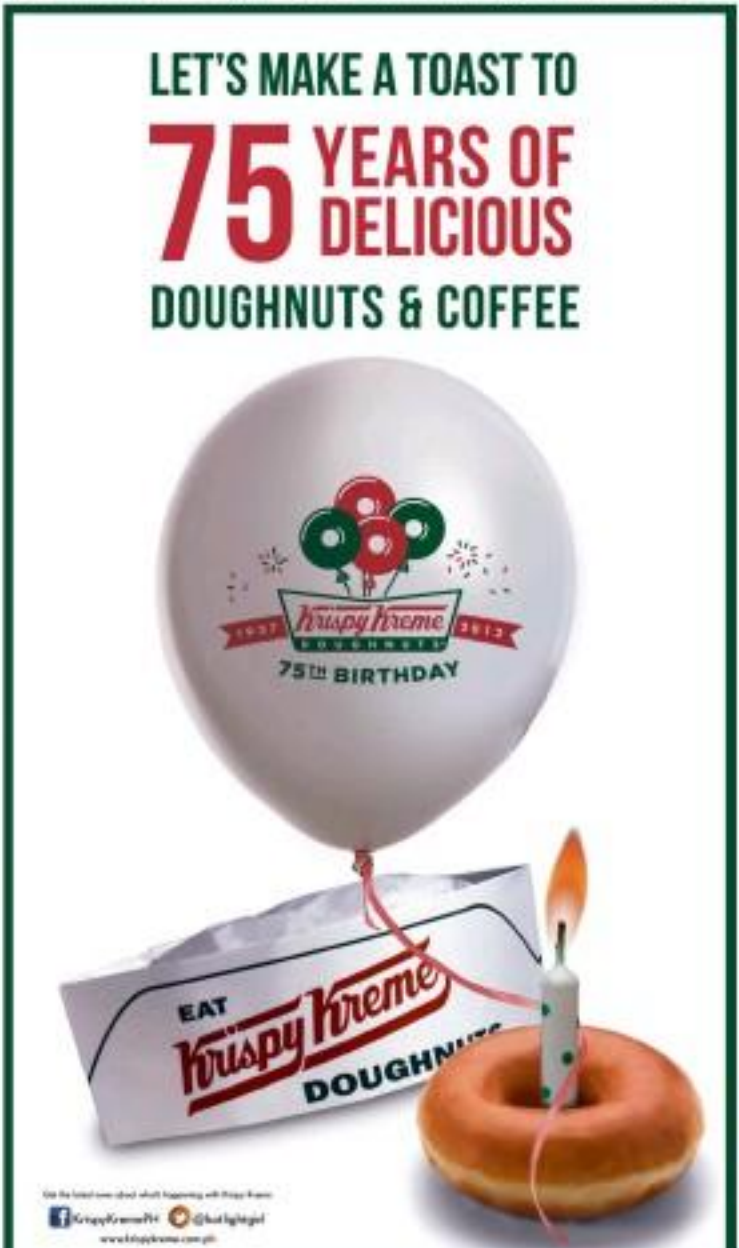
"A campaign that aims to not just generate awareness but generate funds for 12 charities, the campaign is one of Krispy Kreme's ways of saying, 'thank you for helping us reach this point.'

"We will be formally launching this to the public really soon," says Salud. "This is a campaign that we are very proud of because it reflects Krispy Kreme's values. Krispy Kreme is a brand known for building community, an exemplary name that goes beyond the usual outreach efforts."

More Krispy Kreme

Want to know more about Krispy Kreme? Wish there was a way to get first dibs on the brand's promos and announcements? Now you can!

Just follow Krispy Kreme's Official Hotlight Girl on Facebook by liking this link: https://www.facebook.com/ChloeKrispyKremePH



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ILOILO

GENSAN

ANGELES

CALASIAO

US presidential candidates woo H'wood stars

NO AMERICAN presidential candidate worth his chad hanged JQY has reached his personal zenith without celebrities to vouch for them. Celluloid stars provide the glitter in political campaigns.

Nobody commands the aroma of stardom and politics more than President Barack Obama. Shocked by opponents during his 2008 campaign for being a celebrity himself, he craves from a broad assortment of personalities—Hollywood liberals, basketball stars and more.

Friday last week offered a case in point. Obama raised money in the producer Tyler Perry's sprawling southwest Atlanta studio at a gala event featuring a performance by pop star Usher.

Actor Tom Hanks narrated Obama's pro-released campaign biopic.

On Thursday, a visit to the White House by George Clooney an Oscar winner and Obama backer, to meet with the President over conditions in the Sudan drew a gaggle of reporters.

Obama does not have a monopoly on the big names, though.

Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney has campaigned with comedian Jeff Foxworthy, convinced rocker-rapper Kid Rock to perform at a campaign rally, and won supportive words from 40th lead singer Gene Simmons.

Newt Gingrich has action filmmaker Chuck Norris on his corner. Rick Santorum has Governor Sarah Palin.

Ron Paul has an eclectic list of supporters ranging from Kelly Clarkson to Snoop Dogg. Oliver Stone, Julietta Lewis and Vince Vaughn.

Such proximity to stardom can reap big benefits for a politician. Chris Lehane, a Democrat consultant who has worked for Al Gore and Bill Clinton, says personalities help change the normally antiseptic look of a political event.

"These celebrities are celebrities primarily because they have a unique ability to connect with people," he said. "You can them as a bridge to connect with their fans and their audiences."

For Obama, whose campaign so far has focused principally on fundraising, celebrities such as Clooney, Will Smith, Magic Johnson and Antonio Banderas help attract the big-dollar givers. First Lady Michelle Obama was fundraising in Los Angeles, the full-size indoor basketball court in the home of Dallas Mavericks star guard Vince Carter or the sprawling grounds of television producer Shonda Rhimes.

Last Friday, Obama was on a fundraising pace, hitting five events in two cities in one day. Today's end, Obama had participated in 188 fundraisers since last April, when he filed for reelection with the Federal Election Commission.

Last month in Los Angeles, Obama had a star-studded evening for about 3,000 supporters that featured a performance by the Grammy-winning rock band Foo Fighters, followed by a more intimate dinner featuring Clooney and actor Jim Belushi.

Friday's activities were similar, with a Get Lo concert at Tyler Perry Studios—tickets ranged from $500 for general admission to $2,500 and $1,000 for VIP—followed by a $35,000 per person dinner at Perry's house.

Some celebrities play down their outrage persona when meeting with candidates. Last Monday, Foxworthy skipped the jokes when he campaigned with Romney in Alabama, telling audiences he had never look- ed with politics before.

Stars, Lehane said, can also be known quantity if they don't always subscribe to all- lines to the campaign talking points. Lehane recalls Cher at- tending a general- reporters at a campaign event for Gore in the fall of 2000, where she advocated her views on the Middle East situation, which were at odds with the Gore campaign's views.

"You have to be careful when you mind with celebrities," Lehane said. "First of all, what they say and do while in their space is unscripted and sometimes does not translate well when passed through the political prism. Second spokesmanship, yourself. Four- eyes aspects of that celebrity's life."

Comedian Get Lo, who has an explosive oddball list song entitled "F___ You." Not exactly in consonance with Obama's appeal for civility. "I know the President is a fan but I do not know about some of his songs!" said White House spokesperson Jay Carney. AP

KID ROCK

ROBERT de Niro

GEORGE Clooney

CEE LO Green

MOVIE TIME

GLORIETTA 5

1: THE HUNGER GAMES
2: THE HUNGER GAMES
3: THE MUPPETS (2D)
4: CORAZON: ANG UNANG AWAKING
5: THE LORAX/JOHN CARTER
6: THE HUNGER GAMES (2D)
7: MIRROR, MIRROR

GREENBELT 5

1: MIRROR, MIRROR
2: THE HUNGER GAMES

GREENHILLS 2

1: THE HUNGER GAMES
2: THE HUNGER GAMES (2D)
3: THE LORAX/MIRROR, MIRROR
4: THE MUPPETS (2D)
5: THE HUNGER GAMES

MARQUEE MALL

1: THE HUNGER GAMES
2: THE HUNGER GAMES (3D)
3: THE MUPPETS (3D)
4: THE LORAX/MIRROR, MIRROR
5: THE HUNGER GAMES

MARQUEE MALL

1: THE HUNGER GAMES (3D)
2: MIRROR, MIRROR
3: THE LORAX (3D)
4: THE MUPPETS (3D)
5: THE HUNGER GAMES
6: CORAZON: ANG UNANG AWAKING
7: JOHN CARTER

ROBINSONS

1: THE LORAX/JOHN CARTER
2: THE HUNGER GAMES
3: THE MUPPETS (2D)
4: THE HUNGER GAMES (2D)
5: CORAZON: ANG UNANG AWAKING
6: MIRROR, MIRROR
7: THE HUNGER GAMES

ABREEZA

1: THE MUPPETS (3D)
2: THE HUNGER GAMES (3D)
3: THE HUNGER GAMES
4: MIRROR, MIRROR

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Fulfillment beyond the glamor

HANGS. Ati Meral would make one headturner of a dresser.

By Rayzel San Diego Jr.

GMA 7 actress Venice del Mural has seen both sides of the movie industry, and the unpossess, she believes, has helped her grow.

Venice, who often plays the best friend or worst enemy of lead characters in Regine shows (most recently in the afternoon soap, "Kokak"), is best working behind the scenes, as assistant director in actor-turned-director Joey Reyes' indie horror flick, "Hatak" (ghost in Bisaya).

Behind the camera

Although she had a cameo in the film, Venice, a "Starstruck" alumna, spent more time behind the camera than in front of it.

Along with Jose Carlo Cruz, she co-wrote the Cinemalaya winner "Last Supper No. 3"). Noel Zuasola and lead actor Ishmy Ramirez, Venice also assumed the role of producer in "Hatak," which likewise saw production from the director's Tenten Expedicion de Filipinas workshops.

"I learned a lot," she says of her experience as AD. "Now, I understand why shoots or tapings get delayed. I appreciate more the hard work the crew puts into a concert or TV show."

Venice confesses that when the film had a special screening recently, she ended up watching the audience more than what was unfolding on-screen. She recalls, "I had already seen the film at home, so I took most of the audience's reaction. I am happy that they liked the film. They screamed during the scary scenes and I overheard some viewers debating about the story."

Here, she's hooked.

"When I am no longer active as an actress, I would like to work behind the camera," she says. "I hope to try in more indie films, given the chance."

She is eyeing the role of a comedic villain in her glamorous, for a change: "I always play a bad girl who is sexy and English-speaking. If ever I do another indie film, I would like to portray a villainess from the sixties. Someone who is reckless and insane."

When Venice met Joey on the set of the GMA 7 series "How Sara," they hit it off instantly.

"He asked if I wanted to try theater. My boyfriend Ishmy was able to join the cast of a play (Virgo?) that Joey directed," she recounts.

She was an extension of Ishmy's entourage first when Joey decided to cast a film, she tragedy mark can make go down in "Hatak."

"I never thought I could do the job of an assistant director," she quips. "On the set of my TV shows, I asked for tips from the ACs."

They taught her to study the script carefully before each take.

Be prepared

"Some directors leave the blocking to the AD, so you should always report to the set prepared, with your script breakdown ready."

Studying with boyfriend Ishmy in "Hatak" made things easier for her, despite the sleepless nights.

"We support each other. I would often act as his make-up stall. I would ring him up on his cell phone whenever he had an early shoot or morning," she said.

Her sister Ishmy, who top-bills Will Fredo's indie film "Ito Nonoise Mutra," is "noisy and pantsera. He seldom loses his cool, so if he gets mad, you'd better hide."

SIZ "SISTERS" Judy Ann Santos and Sarah Geronimo

A wish for Sarah

JUDY ANN Santos shares her daughter in Sarah Geronimo, whom she considers her younger sister.

"Sarah is a very insecure girl. I sometimes catch her staring at her nose in the mirror—ang pangit-pangit ko, ha. Sometimes, her legs are not big, she's also not comfortable wearing crop tanktops. But when she's onstage, she transforms into a totally different person. Also when she's acting, she's totally unaware that she has great comedic timing. ... What I really wish for Sarah is for her to pursue the things that other really wants as a person. If she wants to study in a normal school, she should. If only to experience what it feels like to be a normal student. I have advised her to travel, maybe to other Asian countries first. She can go with friends or by herself. She should see the world from a different perspective. That is something I missed out on when I was single. She will surely learn a lot from such an experience."

—Marinel R. Cruz

MEGAN Riley as Joy Lyon

Katharine...

From page 6

you even it would have been.

Different for, it could very well have been the same for some people, it is a rocket ship—an absolute great launch in the moon. Mine was an interesting series of hills, valleys and mountains; all the disappointments and struggles that I have had in the last four or five years as an actress, and all the roles that I have gone out for, prepared me for something like this.

Katharine, did Steven Spielberg see you in the audition?

K: I met with him. I was very excited and bubbly. I probably talked too much! He was lovely. He listened to me talk. He has been developing this show for a long time. One of the reasons he met with me was that he probably saw Karen in me. Meeting Mr. Spielberg was one of those amazing moments.

When was the first time you saw a Marilyn Monroe movie?

M: I grew up thinking that it was a bit cliché for blondes to love Marilyn, so I resisted her for a while. Then I read a biography of Arthur Miller in college. I read about their tumultuous marriage and specifically about the film that he wrote for her, "The Misfits." I was intrigued and I watched it. I immediately fell in love with her. I could not get enough of her story. That movie is still one of my all-time favorites.

D: I didn't watch a movie of Marilyn when I was a kid. I watched films like "The Sound of Music" and "Magic" in the 80s. My parents jumped over Marilyn's era. I grew up knowing who Marilyn Monroe was but it was not until I had the opportunity that I started seeing her movies and reading about her.

What is the essential thing about Monroe that you brought to your audition and to the show's members?

K: In my first audition, it was my character singing the iconic "Happy birthday, Mr. President." I felt quite comfortable singing that because she had a very fun vibrato and it is very bendy. When I started to the series, I put a lot of pressure on myself to really feel like Marilyn. But it does not have to be an exact impersonation of her. Getting her essence is what I have been obsessing about. Internally, I have been researching.

D: I find it terrifying because there is no right way to do it. Neither of us will be a perfect Marilyn. But we both had to be okay with what we bring to the role while paying homage to who she was, her essence, as well as staying true to ourselves through the performances that it must present to reality. If we only mimic someone, there is no truth in it. You will have to strike a balance between paying homage to Marilyn and bringing yourself to it. In that way it can be honest, moving, funny and touching. Otherwise, it is just somebody dancing around in a wig and a dress.

ENTERTAINMENT

BRAVE Lubiasz on her recent holiday in Saint-Sorge, France. Her dad taught her how to ski and snowboard when she was just a kid.

Homecoming star-princess

After three years, 'StarStruck' winner experiences a European winter again

By Bayani San Diego Jr.
Photos courtesy of Sarah Lubiasz

BETTER late than never. Will, summer just around the corner, "StarStruck" winner Sarah Lubiasz got to spend a belated winter holiday in Europe last month with fellow GMA 7 stars Dereck Monasterio and Enzo Pineda.

The guys joined Sarah in Geneva, Switzerland, for her homecoming reunion on Feb. 11.

Sarah left Europe three years ago to join the reality talent search "StarStruck" here. She recalled that she had left without saying goodbye to her buddies.

Upon her arrival here, Sarah and friends were waiting at the airport. "I was surprised. They scored hmmmx and popped [illegible]," the recruited.

At his concert, she was anxious at first, but when she saw the crowd singing and dancing along, her tension melted away. "We had fun apart from Enzo and Dereck. Miss Aurora also performed with us."

Mom, who is based in Switzerland, had British singer-songwriter [illegible] to [illegible], she explained.

After the concert, she took Enzo and Dereck to Saint-Sorge in France, a mountain resort 20 minutes away from Geneva, by the Swiss border. "My dad taught me how to ski when I was seven," she

HOMECOMING » 8

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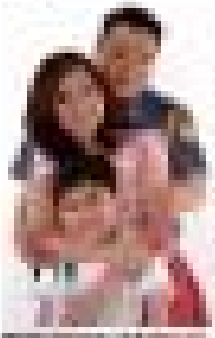
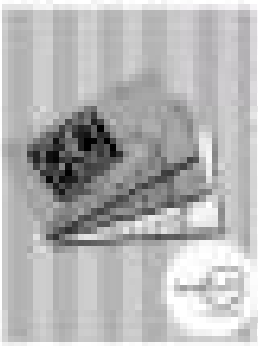
New 'Jamieseyve' makes a good first i



Twitter users and stars make natural enemies, says TV hos



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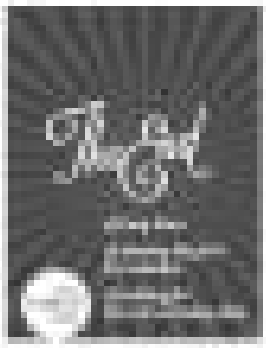

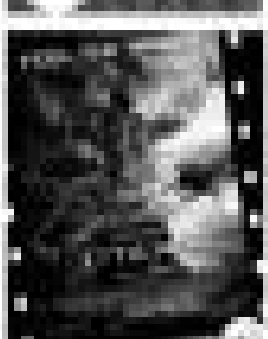

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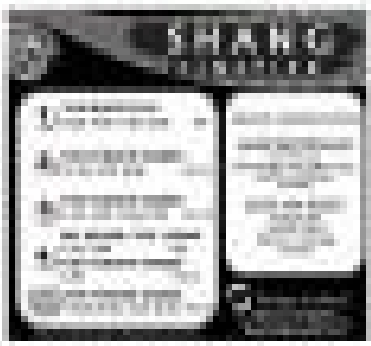
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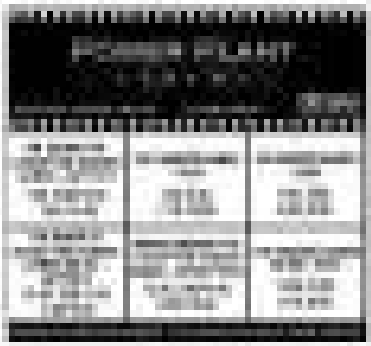
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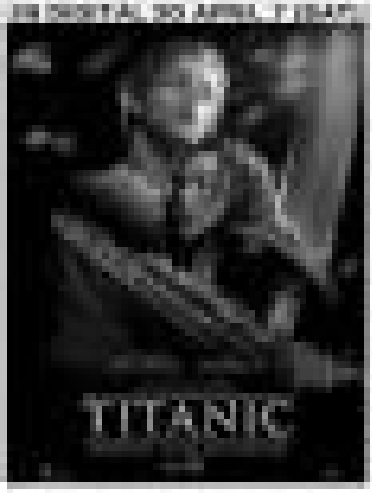
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ENJOY. Sarah and Dominica Pura, behind them, the Eiffel Tower. They took his sightseeing.

Crime-solving for real

Cable TV series features Filipino DNA analyst in April 2 episode

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Correspondent

DR. MARIA Corazon de Ungria: "The producers were very professional."

HIT CRIME shows "CSI" and "Criminal Minds" may have popularized the importance of DNA evidence found in crime scenes. Identifying the genetic codes left by culprits is crucial to solving mysterious or complicated cases—a meticulous process that the Philippines' top DNA analyst, Dr. Maria Corazon de Ungria, considers imperative if we must pursue or diagnose a suspect's presumed guilt.

Overtime-shot

Dr. Ungria will appear in the fifth episode of the Old Globe-Investigation Discovery series, "Partners in Crime," which features real cases from different Asian countries. "I was contacted by the producers in late October 2010 via e-mail and phone for an interview," Dr. Ungria recalled in an e-mail interview with Inquirer.

"They filmed overtime our weekend before I left for a conference in Singapore," she said. "I gave credit to the hardworking crews and my team at the DP Human Identification Laboratory (DPHIL) DNA Lab for being able to work on such short notice."

In the episode, Dr. Ungria's culture from DNA testing was done in a case involving an elderly man accused of abuse. She also talked about a homicide case, a grisly crime committed in another part of the country.

Important medium

Dr. Ungria told Inquirer: "TV is a very important medium that reaches a whole public without the limitation of physical location, cultures and beliefs. I needed to select the subjects that could carry that message... without sensationalizing or distorting. The producer of 'Partners in Crime' convinced me of their professionalism, so I agreed to be part of the series."

In the Philippines, admission of DNA evidence by crime scenes was allowed by the Supreme Court in the late 1990s. Dr. Ungria suggested that strict training in the gathering of such a valuable evidence be promoted, like enforcement "to command focusing on the training of technicians who collect samples (the Death crime scenes, both are) scenes of the crime officers, investigators, and allied medical professionals (including pathologists, nurses, medical technologists and dentists)."

Guidelines

Dr. Ungria continued: "Given the developments in DNA technology, the training should include post-mortem/early guidelines in the collection of samples that may be useful sources of DNA. [These] would help in the reconstruction of the series of events leading to the crime."

Science as service

As head of the DNA Analysis Laboratory of the NBI based in UP Diliman, Dr. Ungria manages research projects and services performed in the laboratory. One present achievement to date is on setter involvement in latent-lives that promote the use of natural for the protection of human rights," she said. "From 2001-2006, we worked with the Free Legal Assistance Group (FLAG) on the anti-death penalty campaign, because of a number of wrongful convictions that were discovered upon closer study of the cases..."

("Partners in Crime" airs Monday, 10:30/9:30, on CBA. Dr. Ulgria's episode airs on April 2.)

'Luv U' on Sundays

The new-centered comedy series "Luv U," starring Mercy Sotelino and Miles Ocampo, premieres today 'SOAP 2012' on ABS-CBN.

Homecoming star...

Front page 6

said. "There were lots, to tonight are overwhelming, which was more difficult."

She tried to teach Enzo and Isabella how to snowboard. "They kept falling. But they were able to stand for a short time."

They also visited Nara, where they stayed for three days.

"We were blessed in a hotel along the Champs-Elysées, and we were shopping and visited the Eiffel Tower," she said. "Dominic and Enzo kept taking photos all throughout."

She admitted that she got to know considered native Dietrich better during their European holidays. "Traveling together brings friends closer," she pointed out. "We kept leaving Enzo, who couldn't let go of his cell phone while we were abroad."

WITH HER parents, Rolen and Abdul, at the Louvre

After more than a week, when it was time to go home, Isaela fainted on the aisle-seats big time.

Work wants

"I couldn't help crying after seeing my dad in town. Plus, all my friends were there to see me off," she remembered. "I realized that we had not changed that much of the three years. Our friendship and love for each other had remained the same."

Upon her return, she started work on the upcoming series "Rancho Paradise," which also top-bills Richard Gutierrez and Carla Abellana.

She is both "nervous and excited" to work with Richard. She does not mind so much about the possibility of "falling" for her leading man. "I want to focus on work.

I do not want to disappoint people, especially since this is my first primetime teen."

(bjcruz@inquirer.com)

A Big thumbs Up

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People converged at Greenhills Theater Mall, Shangri-La Mall, Robinsons Galleria, Manila, and Metro East, as well as supermarkets, to take part in previous legs of the Great Payday Sale. Everyone who came also discovered that the PLDT myDSL Great Payday Sale is also the most convenient place to sign up for the strongest Internet connections at home.

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SECTION I. INVITATION

SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF
Supply and Delivery of Backup Hard Disk Drives
(BAC Reference No. 2012-004HDD)

1. The Commission on Elections (COMELEC), through the approved allocation for Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses of the FY2012 Resumption of Continuing Registration Appropriations, intends to apply the sum of Five Hundred Seventy One Thousand Seven Hundred Pesos (Php571,700.00), inclusive of taxes, fees and other mandated charges, in payment for the Supply and Delivery of One Hundred Eleven (111) Units of Backup Hard Disk Drive.

   Bids received in excess of this ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening.

2. The COMELEC now invites bids for the said project. The winning bidder shall fully and completely deliver the goods, subject of the contract, not later than five (5) calendar days from the receipt of the Notice to Proceed. Bidders should have completed, within three (3) years before the date of submission and receipt of bids, a contract similar to the Project. The description of an eligible bidder is contained in the Bidding Documents, particularly, in Section II (Instruction to Bidders).

3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using a non-discretionary "pass/fail" criterion as specified in the Revised Implementing Rules and Regulations (RIR) of Republic Act (RA) 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act".

4. Interested bidders may obtain further information from the COMELEC and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, Mondays to Fridays, except holidays.

   THE BAC SECRETARIAT
   c/o The Administrative Services Department
   Commission on Elections
   (EF Shipping Center Building)
   Intramuros, Manila
   Contact Number: 5270599/5270824

5. Interested bidders may purchase a complete set of Bidding Documents starting March 23, 2012 up to April 13, 2012, from the address above and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of One Thousand Pesos (Php1,000.00).

   It may also be downloaded free of charge from the website of the Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System (PhilGEPS) and the website of COMELEC (www.comelec.gov.ph), provided that Bidders shall pay the non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents not later than the submission of their bids.

   For inclusion of bidder's name in the Government Prequalified List in case it is declared as the winning bidder, prospective bidders are requested to secure the bidding documents/forms in Box Type A, Box Type B and Box Type C, as the case may be, from the Associated Component Documents in the PhilGEPS website, pertaining to this project.

6. The COMELEC will hold a Pre-Bid Conference on March 30, 2012, 10 o'clock in the morning, at the COMELEC Session Hall, 5th Floor, Palacio del Gobernador, Intramuros, Manila, which shall be open only to all interested parties who have purchased the Bidding Documents.

7. Bids must be delivered to the BAC Secretariat, COMELEC Session Hall, on or before April 13, 2012 at 10:00 o'clock in the morning. All Bids must be accompanied by a bid security in any of the acceptable forms and in the amount stated in Clause 14 of Instructions to Bidders (ITB). Late bids shall not be accepted.

8. Bid opening shall commence April 13, 2012 right after the submission of all bids, in the COMELEC Session Hall. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives.

9. The COMELEC reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

ATTY. THOMAS P. HERNAS
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Regional Field Unit XI
F. Bangoy St., Davao City

Solicitation No.: AO-2012-03
Date: March 21, 2012

INVITATION TO BID FOR THE PROCUREMENT OF VETERINARY DRUGS, BIOLOGICS AND SUPPLEMENTS

The Department of Agriculture (DA) thru the National Meat Inspection Service (NMIS) intends to apply the sum of P1,500,000.00 being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to cover the cost of the Procurement of Veterinary Drugs, Biologics and Supplements. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening.

The Department of Agriculture (DA) now invites bids for the Procurement of Veterinary Drugs, Biologics and Supplements.

		DESCRIPTION	**ABC**
		VETERINARY DRUGS, BIOLOGICS AND SUPPLEMENTS	1,500,000.00
10	Vials	Oxytetracycline 20% inj. 100ml	
200	Bottles	Oxytetracycline 5% inj. 100ml	
100	Bottles	Oxytetracycline 10% inj. 100ml	
100	Bottles	Oxytetracycline 20% inj. 100ml	
10	Vials	Ivermectin 1% inj. 50ml	
100	Bottles	Ivermectin 1% inj. 100ml	
10	Bottles	Ivermectin 1% inj. 500ml	
10	Bottles	Ivermectin 3.15% inj. 100ml	
10	Bottles	Ivermectin 3.15% inj. 500ml	
10	Vials	Ivermectin 3.15% inj. 50ml	

Delivery of the goods is required within **15 calendar days** upon receipt of the purchase order. Bidders should have completed a contract similar to the project within the period of three (3) years before the date of submission and receipt of bids as stated in the Bidding Documents.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using a non-discretionary "pass/fail" criterion as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act No. 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act".

Bidding is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, partnerships or organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to RA 5183 and subject to Commonwealth Act 138.

Interested bidders may obtain further information from Department of Agriculture (DA) - 12 and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below during office hours (8:00 AM - 5:00 PM).

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested bidders on March 21, 2012 to April 3, 2012 during working days (8:00 AM - 5:00PM) and upon payment of a non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents in the amount of Two Thousand Pesos (P2,000.00).

The Department of Agriculture (DA) will hold a **Pre-Bid Conference** on **March 28, 2012 at 2:00 PM**, at the Conference Room 1, Bangoy St., Davao City, which shall be open only to all interested parties who have purchased of the Bidding Documents.

Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before April 10, 2012 at 2:00 PM. All Bids must be accompanied by a bid security in any of the acceptable forms.

Bid opening shall be at 2:00 PM on April 10, 2012 at the address above. Late bids shall not be accepted.

The Department of Agriculture (DA) reserves the right to reject any bid, to annul the bidding process and to accept the bid most advantageous to the government.

For further information, please refer to:

Engr. Jose Cielo Ong	Atty. Rodolfo Emilio Arcadio
Tel # (082) 305-3825	Tel # (082) 305-3825 local 101
http://www.da.gov.ph	Fax # (082) 305-3825 local 101
	http://www.da.gov.ph

(Sgd.) **GERARD L. BARGO**
Chairperson, Bids and Awards Committee

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Regional Field Unit XI
F. Bangoy St., Davao City

Solicitation No.: AO-2012-03
Date: March 21, 2012

INVITATION TO BID FOR THE PROCUREMENT AND DELIVERY OF TEN (10) UNITS POWER TILLER WITH SIDE MOWER

The Department of Agriculture (DA) through the Agricultural Mechanization Development Program (AMDP) intends to apply the sum of P1,600,000.00 being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to cover the cost of the Procurement and Delivery of Ten (10) Units Power Tiller with Side Mower. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening.

The Department of Agriculture (DA) now invites bids for Procurement and Delivery of Ten (10) Units Power Tiller with Side Mower.

DESCRIPTION	**ABC**
Procurement and delivery of:	P 1,600,000.00
One (10) Units Power Tiller:	
4WD Diesel Engine (3-cylinder and 3 reverse) and with 4 feet 2.5HP Mower Cutter Bar/ Blade (complete with heavy duty steel gauge with reinforcement)	
- Minimum 12hp to 15hp	
- With single drive, safety wheel (operated), front pay/harrow and rotary blade (convertible) and 4 speed forward	
- Shall include hard binding rod and clip of the COMMANDER with operator's manual and maintenance	
- Shall be provided with hot spot coil during actual field testing	
- Power tiller and mower shall be provided with basic standard tools and spare parts, maintenance and safety guides	
- Shall be provided with a rotary/metal lift trap	
ACCESSORIES:	
Mower Tiller, Engine and Heavy duty Steel Cutter – One (1) unit of point and service (including consumable parts)	
Spare Parts:	
Starter Belt – 1 unit Gasket Set Set – 1 unit	
Starter Rope – 1 unit Spanner Wrench – 1 unit	
Mower Knife/Blade – 1 unit	

Delivery of the goods is required within **30 calendar days** upon receipt of the purchase order. Bidders should have completed a contract similar to the project within the period of three (3) years before the date of submission and receipt of bids as stated in the Bidding Documents.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using a non-discretionary "pass/fail" criterion as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act No. 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act".

Bidding is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, partnerships or organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to RA 5183 and subject to Commonwealth Act 138.

Interested bidders may obtain further information from Department of Agriculture (DA) - 12 and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below during office hours (8:00 AM - 5:00 PM).

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested bidders on March 21, 2012 to April 3, 2012 during working days (8:00 AM - 5:00PM) and upon payment of a non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents in the amount of Two Thousand Pesos (P2,000.00).

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Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before April 10, 2012 at 2:00 PM. All Bids must be accompanied by a bid security in any of the acceptable forms.

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The Department of Agriculture (DA) reserves the right to reject any bid, to annul the bidding process and to accept the bid most advantageous to the government.

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Tel # (082) 305-3825	Tel # (082) 305-3825 local 101
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(Sgd.) **GERARD L. BARGO**
Chairperson, Bids and Awards Committee

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
Regional Office No. 11
Davao City

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT (AEP)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office applications for Alien Employment Permits:

	Name and Address of Company/Employer	Name and Nationality of Proposed Employee/Assignee	Position and Brief Description of Duties
1.	COLMENARES & ESTRO (PHILIPPINES), INC. 2/F Rubeen Center	Mr. Yuan – Kuo Chiu Taiwanese	President
2.	SEVEN-EL ENTERPRISE CORPORATION San Antonio, Bislig	Mr. Wenhua Jiang Chinese	General Coordinator
3.	SEVEN-EL ENTERPRISE CORPORATION San Antonio, Bislig	Ms. Anna Kieu Nuthasathit American	Hotel Supervising Coordinator
4.	LIMING IRON MINING, INC. PTDA, Brgy. Lingasan, Cateel, Davao Oriental	Mr. Jun Matsuzaki Japanese	VP, Production Senior Manager
5.	YAMADA INFORMATION EQUIPMENT (PHILS.) INC. 2/F Landmark, Cabantian, Davao City	Mr. Shinsuke Ikeda Japanese	Vice President / Production Engineering Department
6.	YAMADA INFORMATION EQUIPMENT (PHILS.) INC. 2/F Landmark, Cabantian, Davao City	Mr. Isao Tsuchiyama Japanese	Assistant to the Senior Manager / Production Engineering Section Department
7.	L.P. TUASON RING & IRON, INC. Lot 4 Tambobong Estates, Lasang-Lasang, Davao City	Mr. Soonkwon Choung Korean	Customer Service Representative

If you have any information/objection to the above mentioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

ATTY. RICARDO S. MARTINEZ JR., CESO III
Regional Director

Philippine Economic Zone Authority
Roxas Boulevard corner San Luis St., Pasay City
Tel. No. 551-0444 local 2121 Telefax No. 551-4907
e-mail: bac@peza.gov.ph
www.peza.gov.ph

INVITATION TO BID FOR THE SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF SUNSCREEN WINDY WINDOWS (LOT 1) AND PICK-UP VEHICLES (LOT 2)
(PEZA-BE-2012-02)

1. The Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA), through its Corporate Operating Budget for CY 2012 intends to apply the sum of Three Million Two Hundred Pesos Only (PhP 3,200,000.00) for Lot 1 and Three Million Pesos Only (PhP 3,000,000.00) for Lot 2 being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to cover the cost of the Supply and Delivery of Sunscreen Windy Windows (Lot 1) and Pick-Up Vehicles (Lot 2). Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening.

2. The PEZA now invites bids for the delivery three (3) units Crossover Utility Vehicles and two (2) units Pick-up Vehicles. Delivery of the Goods is required within fifteen (15) calendar days from receipt of Notice to Proceed. Bidder should have completed, within three (3) years from the date of submission and receipt of bids, a contract similar to the Project. The description of an eligible bidder is contained in the Bidding Documents, particularly, in Section II (Instruction to Bidders).

3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using a non-discretionary "pass/fail" criterion as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act (RA) 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act".

   Bidding is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, partnerships, or organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to RA 5183 and subject to Commonwealth Act 138.

4. Interested bidders may obtain further information from the PEZA and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested bidders on 23 March 2012 from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents in the amount of Two Thousand Pesos Only (PhP 2,000.00) for each lot.

   It may also be downloaded free of charge from the website of the Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System (PhilGEPS) and the website of the Philippine Economic Zone Authority, provided that bidders shall pay the non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents not later than the submission of their bids.

6. The PEZA will hold a Pre-Bid Conference on 29 March 2012, 2:00 p.m. at the PEZA Social Hall, 6th Floor, PEZA Building, Roxas Boulevard corner San Luis St., Pasay City, which shall be open only to all interested parties who have purchased the Bidding Documents.

7. Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before 11:00 a.m. of 04 April 2012. All Bids must be accompanied by a bid security in any of the acceptable forms and in the amount stated in ITB Clause 18.

   Bid opening shall be on 04 April 2012, 11:00 a.m. at the PEZA Social Hall, 6th Floor, PEZA Building, Roxas Boulevard corner San Luis St., Pasay City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives. Late bids shall not be accepted.

8. In case any of the above dates is declared as a special non-working holiday, it will be automatically reset on the next working day.

9. The PEZA reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

10. For further information, please refer to:

    Philippine Economic Zone Authority
    Bids and Awards Committee Secretariat
    6/F PEZA Roxas Boulevard corner San Luis St., Pasay City
    Tel. No. 551-0444 local 2121
    bac@peza.gov.ph
    Telefax No. 551-4907
    www.peza.gov.ph

    (Sgd.) **J. FERRER LL. TORRIANI**
    BAC Chairperson

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
2nd & 3rd Building, 827 Intramuros St., Manila, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Hereunder/as given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office applications for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National/Citizenship	Position
KANG SUPREEM KOREAN RESTAURANT [illegible] Level[illegible] Powerhouse Road, Makati City	Myung Cho Kim / Korean	Chef
SAM CHANG LEARNING CENTER INC. 83 L3 Phil-Am Executive Village, Pandacan, Barangay 659, Zone 61, Manila City	Young Ryong Yang / Korean	Operation Manager
CELPHIL EXPRESS INC. 2/F Kowloon Mark Tower, Paseo de Roxas, Makati City	Luke Paul Perard / American	Construction Manager
QUEST EXPLORATION DRILLING (PHILIPPINES), INC. Units 3001, Philamlife Corporate Bank Tower 1000 Ave., [illegible] Pasig City	Russell Joseph Byrne / Australian	Maintenance and Assets Manager
HAPPY HAIR SALON INC. GF Unit 1 & 2 Ayala Triangle Tower, Ayala Triangle cor. Gamboa Road, San Antonio, [illegible] Pasig City	Wanxing Mi Xiao / Korean	General Manager
JT INTERNATIONAL (PHILIPPINES), INC. Warehouse #1 Office Bldg. Sitio Ga-ong, Km 18 Aux. Northern Diversion Cav. Tagaytay City	Shih-Kai Lu / Taiwanese	Lumpy Trainee
ACCENT HRD, INC. [illegible] Ayala Ave., Makati City	Christian Muller / German	Global Outsourcing Coordinator
CHINA BANKING CORPORATION - COMMERCIAL BANKING GROUP GF Pan Laguna Towers, Emilio Jacinto Street, Brgy. Real, Calamba City, Philippines	Yi-Chung Wang / Taiwanese	Risk Team Assistant Vice President, Taiwan Business Department
BRYLUX TECH INC. Unit 1504 Richville Corporate Tower, 1107 Alabang-Zapote Road, Muntinlupa City	Dongchun Kim / Korean	Sales Coordinator
BRYLUX TECH INC. Unit 1504 Richville Corporate Tower, 1107 Alabang-Zapote Road, Muntinlupa City	Mingwon Gwi / Korean	Technical Support
BRYLUX TECH INC. Unit 1504 Richville Corporate Tower, 1107 Alabang-Zapote Road, Muntinlupa City	Wanninghun Kim / Korean	Marketing Manager
LOGICALPHILIPPINES INC. 2/F One World Square, Alabang Hill, Taguig City	Allan Jenn Anda / British	Multilingual Call Analyst
LOGICALPHILIPPINES INC. 2/F One World Square, Alabang Hill, Taguig City	Mike Julian Ell / French	Multilingual Call Specialist
LOGICALPHILIPPINES INC. 2/F One World Square, Alabang Hill, Taguig City	Jose Patrick Mamaril / Filipino	Senior Desk Analyst
COMPASS INTERNATIONAL INC. GF ROBC Plaza, Investacorp Tower, Ayala cor. Gil Puyat ave., Makati City	Huijun Jiang / Chinese	Customer Service
COMPASS INTERNATIONAL INC. GF ROBC Plaza, Investacorp Tower, Ayala cor. Gil Puyat ave., Makati City	Changying Tai / Chinese	Customer Service
COMPASS INTERNATIONAL INC. GF ROBC Plaza, Investacorp Tower, Ayala cor. Gil Puyat ave., Makati City	Su Liu / Chinese	Customer Service
COMPASS INTERNATIONAL INC. GF ROBC Plaza, Investacorp Tower, Ayala cor. Gil Puyat ave., Makati City	Ning Meng / Chinese	Customer Service
COMPASS INTERNATIONAL INC. GF ROBC Plaza, Investacorp Tower, Ayala cor. Gil Puyat ave., Makati City	Wenqing Hu / Chinese	Customer Service
COMPASS INTERNATIONAL INC. GF ROBC Plaza, Investacorp Tower, Ayala cor. Gil Puyat ave., Makati City	Tingchun Chi / Chinese	Customer Service
MEGAWIDE CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION 3/F NCT 1 Bo Gon, Laging Handa, Quezon City	Aftab Anwar Malik / Pakistani	Planning Manager
MACRAMI HILL INTERNATIONAL (OTHERWISE) INC. PHILIPPINE BRANCH GF Raffles Corp. Center F. Ortigas Jr. Rd., Ortigas Ctr., Pasig City	Kaija Kathrin Lange / German	Financial Language Mixer - Portuguese language
MACRAMI HILL INTERNATIONAL (OTHERWISE) INC. PHILIPPINE BRANCH GF Raffles Corporate Center F. Ortigas Jr. Road, Ortigas Ctr., Pasig City	Huijiang Qiao / Chinese	Financial Language Mixer - Chinese language
MAGIC BUSINESS SERVICES PHILIPPINES, INC. GF Solaris One Tower 2, Mahidol cor. Wilson Corporate Center, Pasig City	Stefan Johannes Friedrich Kuchler / German	Managing Director
e-PERFORMANCE CONTACT CENTER CORE 21/F Ayala Triangle, Ayala Ave., Makati City	Kevin Ray Byrd / American	Director of Operations
ASIA-CORE DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS PHILS. COMPANY Unit 401 Manila Executive Center, 114 Valero St., Salcedo Village, Makati City	Kwon Park / Korean	General Manager
T-MAR FISHING, INC. Lot 4-B2 La Laura Brgy., Bolinao, Pangasinan	Reena Rae Quemada / Filipino	Store Manager
CITI-ARUP 3 PARTNERS HOLDING LIMITED 4/F Tower 1, The Rockwell Business Center, Sheridan Compound, Ortigas Ave., Pasig City	Kwok Wai Chow / Chinese	Senior Construction Manager
ASIANE MOTORS INC. 2 Unit 4 Island Data Bldg., Angelo King Int'l. Technology Park, Brgy. Bo. Pinagkaisa, Makati City	Dongkyu Lee / Korean	Business Development Manager

If you have any information/evidence to the above mentioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

ATTY. ALLAN S. TORRES
Regional Director

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Republic of the Philippines
Province of Eastern Samar
Municipality of Llorente

ERRATUN

In the bidding for the Barangay Hall of Lawaan, Llorente, Eastern Samar, the Municipality of Llorente, Eastern Samar announced on June 2, 2012 and 9 March 2012 posted in Philippine Daily Inquirer and Philippine Star Newspaper, respectively.

Description of Works

Item No.	Scope of Work	Quantity	Unit
A. General Items			
1	Site Activities		
101	Clearing and Grubbing	15,000.00	sq.m.
102	Demolition of Concrete	40.00	cu.m.
103	Demolition of Reinforced Concrete	40.00	cu.m.
104	Excavation, Transportation	15,000.00	cu.m.
105	Backfilling, Compaction	15,000.00	cu.m.
2	Concrete Reinforcement		
201	Reinforcing Steel	3,000.00	kg.
202	Reinforcing Steel Bars	3,000.00	kg.
3	Formwork Materials		
301.1	Wall Formwork	10.00	sq.m.
301.2	Column Formwork	10.00	sq.m.
301.3	Beam Formwork	10.00	sq.m.
4	Concrete Materials		
401	Concrete, Ready Mixed	100.00	cu.m.

Bidding documents are available to interested prospective bidders from the Municipal Treasurer's Office upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Five Thousand Pesos (P5,000.00).

Bidding will be conducted in accordance with the Philippine Government Procurement Reform Act (R.A. 9184) and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

Interested bidders may obtain further information from the Municipal Engineer's Office.

A pre-bidding conference shall be held on March 30, 2012 at 10:00 A.M. at the Municipal Hall.

Bids must be duly received by the BAC Secretariat on or before April 10, 2012 at 10:00 A.M. at the Municipal Hall. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in the form of a cash, a manager's check, a bank draft/guarantee or irrevocable letter of credit issued by a reputable bank, or a surety bond callable upon demand, in favor of the Municipality of Llorente.

The Municipality of Llorente reserves the right to reject any and all bids, declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

Bids must be submitted in the address and on or before the date specified above.

For further information, please refer to:

MR. ROBERTO A. ABAD
Chairman, BAC
Municipality of Llorente
Province of Eastern Samar

VMC VISA & MIGRATION CONSULTANCY
Unit 2101 Oakland 99 Tower 2, 129 Dela Costa Street, Salcedo Village, Makati City
[illegible]

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  - STUDENT NURSES, HIGH SCHOOL GRAD, ENGINEERS
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  - DENTAL HYGIENISTS
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PILT Migration Pty Ltd.
[illegible]
South Melbourne Victoria,
Australia 3205
(+61) 3 9682 6899
Email: [illegible]

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is hereby given that ten (10) pieces of **General Agent's Receipt** bearing Nos. 93763, 93711, 93721, 93734, 93795, 93764, 93772, 93756, 93741, and 93748 of the **SPRING** Insurance Corporation has been reported lost.

[illegible]

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Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY
BOARD OF INVESTMENTS (BOI)
and Industry Complex
Makati City

INVITATION TO BID

Project Title (No. of Lots): [illegible]

1. The Philippine Government, through the Department of Trade and Industry, Board of Investments (BOI), intends to apply the sum of [illegible] being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to cover the cost of the Project as detailed in the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Project. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening.

Lot No.	Description	Quantity	Unit
Lot 1	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Lot 2	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Lot 3	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Lot 4	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Lot 5	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Lot 6	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Lot 7	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Lot 8	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Lot 9	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Lot 10	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Lot 11	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Lot 12	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Estimated ABC: [illegible]

2. The Philippine Government's Procurement Act and the Terms of Reference specify that only [illegible] shall be eligible to participate in this bidding.

Item	Description	Quantity	Unit
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

3. Bidders shall be pre-qualified to bid for the [illegible] contract in accordance with [illegible].

Item No.	Description	Quantity	Unit
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

4. Bidding will be conducted through [illegible] procedures as specified in [illegible].

5. Bidding documents may be purchased by any interested bidder on or before [illegible] from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee for the bidding documents in the amount of [illegible].

6. Bids must be received by the BAC Secretariat at the address below on or before [illegible]. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in the form of [illegible].

7. Bid opening shall be on [illegible] at the address below. Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders' representatives who choose to attend. The bidders' representatives who are present shall sign a register evidencing their attendance.

8. The Philippine Government reserves the right to reject any and all bids, declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract at any time prior to contract award in accordance with [illegible], without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

9. For further information, please refer to:

[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

10. The Philippine Government's Procurement Act and the Terms of Reference specify that only [illegible] shall be eligible to participate in this bidding.

11. Bidding will be conducted through [illegible] procedures as specified in [illegible].

12. Bidding documents may be purchased by any interested bidder on or before [illegible] from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee for the bidding documents in the amount of [illegible].

13. The Philippine Government reserves the right to reject any and all bids, declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract at any time prior to contract award in accordance with [illegible], without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

14. For further information, please refer to:

[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF SOUTHERN LEYTE
Maasin City

INVITATION TO BID

The Provincial Government of Southern Leyte through Hon. [illegible] invites [illegible] to participate in the bidding for the [illegible] project.

Brief Description:	[illegible]
Approved Budget for the Contract:	[illegible]
ABC:	[illegible]
Delivery Period:	[illegible]

Prospective bidders should have completed a contract similar to the Project, the value of which is not less than [illegible] of the ABC, adjusted to current prices using the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB) Consumer Price Index, within the last [illegible] years.

All prospective bidders should submit their Statement of Contracts Completed and Ongoing and Financial Statements for the last [illegible] years.

The bidding documents may be purchased from the Provincial Treasurer's Office upon payment of a non-refundable fee of [illegible].

Activity	Schedule
[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]

The Provincial Government of Southern Leyte reserves the right to reject any and all bids, declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

For more information, please refer to:

[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Transportation and Communications
CIVIL AERONAUTICS BOARD
[illegible]

RE: APPLICATION FOR AUTHORITY TO OPERATE AS AN INTERNATIONAL AIR CHARTER/ NONSCHEDULED OPERATOR

[illegible]

Applicant

NOTICE OF APPLICATION

Pursuant to the provisions of Republic Act No. 776, as amended, notice is hereby given that [illegible] has filed with the Civil Aeronautics Board an application for authority to operate as an international air charter/nonscheduled operator. The application shall be given due course by the Board on or before 30 April 2012.

Persons opposed to the application may file their written objections supported by documentary evidence at the Public Assistance Desk, Civil Aeronautics Board, [illegible] within fifteen (15) days from the last publication of this notice. Failure to file any objection within the prescribed period will be construed as lack of opposition to the application. The Board will not entertain any protest or opposition filed after the said date. Upon the filing of any objection, the Board will schedule the case for hearing, the date and venue of which will be announced in due time.

The applicant is required to submit the following documents and pay the corresponding fees before the scheduled hearing: (1) Proof of publication of the notice of application in a newspaper of general circulation; (2) Proof of posting of the notice of application at the Public Assistance Desk, Civil Aeronautics Board, [illegible]; and (3) Proof of payment of the filing fee in the amount of [illegible].

The application is issued on the condition that the applicant shall not charge or make known any rate or fare for the transportation of passengers, cargo and mail over routes or between points which have been allocated by the Board to Philippine Airlines, Inc. and Philippine Air Lines, Inc. (PAL) unless the rate or fare has been agreed upon by the carriers, duly approved by the Board and published in the newspapers of general circulation.

Copies of the application are available for inspection and reproduction at the Public Assistance Desk, Civil Aeronautics Board, [illegible] during office hours.

[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

ANNOUNCEMENT

TO ALL BP CREDIT COOPERATIVE MEMBERS

You are all invited to attend the 47th Annual General Assembly and Election of Officers on Friday, March 30, 2012 at **ANG BAGAY NG ALUMNI**, UP Campus, Diliman, Quezon City. Registration will start at 1:00 p.m. followed by General Assembly and Election of Officers until 5:00 p.m.

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Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Department Circular No. DC2012-03-0004

DIRECTING COMPLIANCE WITH THE ELECTRIC POWER INDUSTRY REFORM ACT OF 2001 (EPIRA) TO ADDRESS THE POWER SUPPLY SITUATION INCLUDING THE RATIONALIZATION OF THE AVAILABLE CAPACITIES IN THE MINDANAO GRID

WHEREAS, pursuant to the declared policy of the State under Republic Act No. 9136, otherwise known as the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001 (EPIRA), the Department of Energy (DOE) is mandated to ensure the reliability, quality and security of supply of electric power;

WHEREAS, Section 4(a) of EPIRA provides that the Wholesale Electricity Spot Market (WESM) shall be governed by the Philippine Electricity Market Corporation (PEMC) which is responsible for the operation of the WESM in a fair, efficient and transparent manner;

WHEREAS, the WESM Rules dated [illegible] and the February 2010 Manual for Declaration, Offering and Dispatch of Energy and Reserve Bids provide that the power supplied and sold in the WESM are adequately covered by ancillary services;

WHEREAS, the National Grid Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP), [illegible] is mandated to ensure a "wet" and "dry" season reserve margin of at least one (1) contingency, as provided in the Philippine Grid Code, to maintain adequate reserves to cover for the loss of the largest generating unit or transmission line, whichever is more critical, in the event of an outage;

WHEREAS, the Transition Supply Contracts (TSC) between Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corporation (PSALM) and the generation companies, which expired on [illegible] and 31 August 2011, were entered into to ensure sufficient and reliable supply for the captive market of the distribution utilities, and to provide a level playing field for the contestable market during the first few years of its operation;

WHEREAS, the Transition Supply Contracts (TSC) between Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corporation (PSALM) and the generation companies, which expired on 31 August 2011, were entered into to ensure sufficient and reliable supply for the captive market of the distribution utilities, and to provide a level playing field for the contestable market during the first few years of its operation;

WHEREAS, since the TSCs have expired, the Mindanao Grid is now exposed to the vagaries of the WESM, particularly the high prices and tight supply situation in the Luzon Grid, which have a direct impact on the Mindanao Grid;

WHEREAS, PSALM, through the National Power Corporation (NPC) has competed the Land Transaction Matrix, and confirmed by NGCP which serves as the basis for load curtailment;

WHEREAS, it has been observed that several customers are not complying with the Captive Market conditions by withdrawing from the grid over and above their Captive Market levels in the absence of valid customer accommodation and coordination;

WHEREAS, to ensure security of the grid, there is a need to implement and direct load-shedding and demand reduction measures to comply with the required reserve level contingency and maintenance events;

WHEREAS, after a series of bilateral group discussions, consultations, and meetings with relevant electric power industry participants, stakeholders, and concerned entities, the DOE has determined the urgent need to direct compliance of transitional rules and guidelines and mandatory rules application of all available generation capacities in Mindanao, including a declaration of the economic dispatch mode of operation in order to address the power supply situation in Mindanao region;

NOW THEREFORE, premises considered, the DOE hereby declares as follows:

SECTION 1. Scope and Application. This Circular shall apply to all agencies and entities owning natural forest and all electric power industry participants in Mindanao, including generation companies, distribution utilities, private investors owned utilities, Electric Cooperatives (ECs) and other stakeholders.

SECTION 2. Responsibilities. Pursuant to their respective mandates and functions under the EPIRA and its implementing Rules and Regulations, the Philippine Grid Code (PGC), the Philippine Distribution Code and other relevant laws, rules and issuances, the following shall be assigned to ensure that full compliance and within the policies and measures provided in DC [illegible] of this Circular:

(a) **National Grid Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP).** The NGCP is hereby directed to perform the obligations of operating and maintaining the reliability, adequacy, security, quality and integrity of the transmission system in accordance with the performance standards for the operations and maintenance of the grid, as set forth in the Philippine Grid Code.

In the performance of the obligations, NGCP is hereby directed to:

i. use any and all available capacities in maintain load-generation balance including the contracted capacities and those which they may be directed to operate by the DOE;

ii. monitor reserve compliance by all customers in the Luzon-Mindanao Grid, and report to the DOE all violations of this compliance;

iii. issue a penalties advisory/load curtailment to customers in maximum reserve level contained based on the load curtailment matrix considered with the Circular;

iv. upon the WESM's directive, those customers who are not compliant with the load-to-maintain levels shall be curtailed that such action will expedite other market participant and likewise, implement the rotating of the grid;

v. [illegible] the transmission facilities and undertake actions to maintain operating capacity to further coordination; and

vi. [illegible] coordinate with NPC to maximize available generation capacity as committed to ensure optimal use [illegible].

Upon the effectivity of this Circular, the NGCP shall immediately comply with the directives set out in this Circular and shall continue to maintain all available capacities to meet the power requirements in Mindanao.

NGCP is directed to closely coordinate with the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corporation (PSALM), Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corporation (PSALM), Transco, the National Power Corporation (NPC), generation companies, public [illegible] and the DOE in the implementation of this Circular and in the distribution of the available capacities as contracted with each participant.

(b) **Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corporation (PSALM) and National Power Corporation (NPC).** PSALM and NPC are hereby directed to make available capacity of their power plants in Mindanao, [illegible] to the following schedule of dispatch:

i. [illegible] all available capacities of their power plants in the Mindanao region for emergency operations in the event of [illegible] by the System Operator (SO) of the Mindanao Grid;

ii. implement measures to increase [illegible] capacity of the Mindanao Grid;

iii. [illegible] maximize [illegible] and deactivate or existing agreements; and

iv. [illegible] and coordinate with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and [illegible] to expedite the issuance of [illegible].

All other available [illegible] the available capacity of any given plant in order to meet customer demand. The [illegible] shall be [illegible] and [illegible] by the Board of the Administrator of Transmission Corporation and [illegible] any changes thereto.

To ensure the [illegible], PSALM and NPC shall immediately comply with the [illegible] directives immediately upon the effectivity of this Circular.

(c) **National Transmission Administration (NEA).** Consistent with its statutory obligations, NEA is directed to provide all the necessary assistance to ECs to facilitate:

i. ensure that ECs have properly completed and executed the contracts for the supply of contracts power in their respective franchise areas to which they are obliged to be distribution utilities;

ii. ensure the implementation of the load curtailment program of the ECs;

iii. ensure the registration of the contracted capacities and energy;

iv. ensure compliance of ECs to [illegible] contracted capacities pursuant to [illegible] and coordinated by NGCP;

v. [illegible] the unregistered connection to former captive customers and other power suppliers of ECs to [illegible] supply and [illegible]; and

vi. assist the ECs in the conduct of information and education campaign on the current supply situation and the load curtailment activities of ECs.

Within forty (40) days from effectivity of this Circular, NEA shall ensure that the above-mentioned activities are carried out satisfactorily and shall submit a report thereof. Non-compliance with the above-mentioned responsibilities of the part of the ECs shall be a ground for the imposition of fines and/or administrative sanctions and other legal remedies.

(d) **Electric Power Industry Participants.** All electric power industry participants are hereby ordered to ensure full cooperation and compliance with the applicable policies and compliance to the directives to be established to ensure that the requirements set forth in this Circular are complied with.

i. All contracted capacities owned, utilized and/or ECs, including interruptible/controllable loads, shall provide accurate and non-compliance and therefore optimize the use of interruptible/controllable facilities;

ii. All generation facilities and interruptible load comply with the Information Energy Management Program;

iii. Provide congestion and interrupted power shall participate in request and any investment that supportive energy requirements; and

iv. All generators and customers shall agree on a dispatch protocol to be [illegible] by the Commission.

Section 3. Monitoring, Enforcement and Compliance. The DOE, through the Electric Power Industry Management Bureau (EPIMB), shall monitor the compliance of all stakeholders with the provisions of this Circular. Any violation of, or in accordance with the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC), shall formulate and implement enforcement and penalty mechanisms for violations of this Circular, in accordance with existing rules and regulations. Non-compliance with the provisions of this Circular shall be a ground for the imposition of fines and/or administrative sanctions and other legal remedies.

Section 4. Regulatory Support. The ERC is requested to support the enforcement of the regulatory requirements to implement the measures, determination and, when necessary, the imposition of fines and penalties in order to address the current situation in Mindanao, in accordance with existing rules and regulations.

Section 5. Legal Agency. The DOE shall be the legal agency in executing the situations and programs are ongoing carried out in accordance the objectives of this Circular.

Section 6. Effectivity. This Circular shall take effect immediately and will remain in effect until otherwise rescinding the DOE.

Issued this March 14, 2012 in Taguig City, Metro Manila, Philippines.

JOSE RENE D. ALMENDRAS
Secretary

(PD - March 22, 2012)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education
Regional Office
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Kagawaran ng Edukasyon
PROCUREMENT SERVICE
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

DepED

INVITATION TO BID

The Department of Education, through the Bids and Awards Committee intends to apply the sum of **PHILIPPINE PESOS Seventy Six Million Five Hundred Thousand & 00/100 (Php76,500,000.00)** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for **Printing of Readiness Skills Activity Sheets and Delivery to Legal Consignee Offices Nationwide. Bids received in excess of the ABC** shall be rejected. Bidders are as follows:

Bidder/ Tongue Based (MTB) Languages	Quantity					Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) in Php
	Kinder	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	
Bidder	104,170	147,370	7,000		4,154	
Bidder	900,000	126,000	847,733		21,783	
Bidder	28,170	21,000	4,170			
Bidder	28,170	21,000	4,170			
Bidder	28,170	21,000	4,170			
Bidder	28,170		21,000			
Bidder	28,170		21,000			
Bidder	28,170		21,000

(Ret.) JUSTICE CATALINO R. CASTAÑEDA, JR.

(Sept. 20, 1932 – March 20, 2012)

U.P. College of Law, Class of 1955

Associate Justice of the Sandiganbayan
(September 24, 1987 to September 20, 2002)

Presiding Judge, Regional Trial Court, Branch 17, Manila
(November 11, 1986 to September 23, 1987)

Presiding Judge, Regional Trial Court, Branch 24, Iloilo City
(January 18, 1985 to November 10, 1986)

Presiding Judge, Court of First Instance of Iloilo, Branch III
(March 8, 1978 to January 17, 1985)

peacefully joined his Creator and beloved wife
Atty. Lucia Coince (†) at the age of 79.

His beloved children, **Clarence Joseph**, **Clark Ignatius** & Irma Ignacio and **Cher Therese** & Rafaelito Sunga; grandchildren **Katrina, Joaquin** and **Frances Lucia**; brothers and sisters & their spouses: Judge Abe (†) & Nena Ortiz (†), Dr. Johnny & Bing Salvado, Dodie (†) & Remy Nicomedes, Boy & Mary Talavera, Rey & Lulu Tenorio and Nitching & Gabid Ferol; relatives and friends request prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at the Faith Chapel of St. John Bosco Parish Church, A. Arnaiz Avenue cor. Amorsolo Street, Makati City.

Interment will be on March 27, 2012, Tuesday at the Heritage Park, Bayani Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City after the 1:30 p.m. mass at St. John Bosco Parish Church.

"I am the Resurrection and the Life; he who believes in Me will live, even when he dies, and whoever lives and believes in Me will never die."
– John 11:25-26

JOSEFINO P. AVANCEÑA

peacefully joined our Lord on
March 19, 2012 at the age of 50.

His mother Glenda; wife Jhik; son Jhaffet; brothers Bebe and Jhay; sister Tina; nephews Mido and Carol; nephew Blinko and Tonk; niece Mishi and Tha-Tha; other relatives and friends request the readers to join them in praying for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body will lie in state at Tangub Chapel, La Funeraria Paz Arcay, Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque City until 8:00 A.M. of March 24, 2012 and from there he will be transferred to San Jose Del Monte, Bulacan Cemetery for interment after the 11:00 A.M. Mass at Sacramento Memorial Park.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

Always caring...
INQUIRER OBITUARIES

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
- Copy of Death Certificate
- Any Identification Document (ID.)

DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT - MESSAGE OF THANKS - DEATH ANNIVERSARY - REMINDERS - FREE LAYOUT DESIGN

Loda Xavier - Fornier

(1915 - 2012)

Passed away peacefully in the Grace of our Lord
on March 20, 2012 at the magnificent age of 96.

She joins her husband, Ex-Congressman Jose Alviera Fornier
and her daughter, Trinidad Fornier, in eternal repose.

She is survived by her children, Jose Jr. and Rosemarie,
Francisco and Irene, Andreaito and Ma. Cecilia, Victorino and Barbara,
Ma. Hennie, Grace Victoria and Jose III, and Josephine;
her grandchildren, Marie Paz, Jojo, Charlie, Milotte, Raffy and Tonton,
Freniree, Joji and Cookie, Channing and Toto,
Andrew, Binky and Carlo, Kimi, Jordana and Adrienne,
Patricia, Victoria and Stanley.

Her remains lie in state at the ancestral home of the
Fornier family in Tobias Fornier (Dao), Antique.
Interment will be on Monday, March 26, 2012
after the 9am mass at the Dao Catholic Church.

We request prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

WINONA MOJICA MAYUGA

peacefully joined her Creator at 9:45 am
on March 19, 2012 at the age of 49.

She will be missed by her loving parents, **Dr. Julio L. Mayuga Jr.** and **Erlinda M. Mayuga**; siblings **Noel** and **Vini**, **Raul** and **Rita**, **Marido** and **Rubeth**, **Zeila**, **Angelo** and **Odette**; nephews **Nathan**, **Kiko**, **Nigel**, and **Patrick**; nieces **Patricia**, **Noramae** and **Meg** and relatives.

Her remains lie in state at the Ascension Chapels by Arlington, 4331 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment is on Sunday, March 25, 2012 at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City after the 8:00 a.m. mass.

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." **(2 Timothy 4)**

CLASSIFIEDS

BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO BID

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following project:

Name of Project/Brief Description	Security Guard Agency of reputable, duly accredited, competent, and experienced manpower/security service provider to provide security, safety and protection services including the safeguarding of the operations, assets, and records/documents of BSP-NCR Head Office Complex
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	Php 180,000.00
Delivery/Completion Period	Twelve (12) months after receipt of Notice to Proceed/Contract

Bidders should submit sworn/notarized Eligibility Documents (duly accredited/competent security agency and completed Annex "C-2") to prove that they are legitimate security agency and have at least 50% of the BSP's total number of guard force, or 100 guards, whichever is lower, and at least 50% of the BSP's Multi-Facility Guard Scheduling as certified by the Philippine Public Safety Division (PPSD) of the Philippine National Police (PNP). Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

Bidding documents detailing the Eligibility, Technical and Financial Requirements, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification, and Award of Contract shall be governed by the provisions and revisions of Republic Act No. 9184 and its Revised Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities/criteria are detailed below:

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of the Bid Documents	Starting on March 2012 (9:00 AM to 4:00 PM only) Place of Issuance: BSP-NCR Head Office - Processing Building A. Mabini cor. Vicente G. Sotto St., Manila, Metro Manila Fee: Php 2,000.00 (Non-refundable)
2. Pre-bid Conference	10 April 2012, 9:00 A.M., BPAD
3. Opening of Bids	23 April 2012, 2:00 P.M., BPAD
4. Bid Evaluation	Three (3) days or in accordance with the prescribed periods stipulated in the revised IRR of R.A. No. 9184
5. Post-qualification	
6. Notice of Award	

The BSP and Chairman of Disbursements for Bidders may be downloaded from the website of the Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System (PhilGEPS) and the website of the BSP (http://www.bsp.gov.ph). The complete set of the Bidding Documents may be purchased from the Secretariat of the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) upon payment of the non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents pursuant to the latest Guidelines issued by the GPPB. The BAC shall allow the purchase of the Bidding Documents only from the date of first publication.

Only bidders who have purchased the bidding documents shall be allowed to make an offer to participate in the Bidding Process and to undertake any of the activities.

The BSP reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to declare the bidding as failure, and to undertake negotiation as stated in the bidding process and to waive all defects in the bidding process, without incurring any liability to the affected bidders. Furthermore, the BSP reserves the right to waive any minor defects or formality and/or accept the proposal most advantageous to the Agency.

(sgd.) **CARMELO F. SORIANO**
Chairman

More Classifieds

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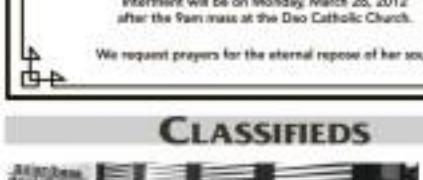

TV5 Princess, Star Factor winner, and co-star of David Archuleta for TV5's new television Mandila Ako, Esla Caballero, signs up with Asian Base Dental Group. 'We're so honoured to have her along with the rest 4 brightness stars of Star Factor,' said Asian Base Dental Group's manager Quiry Ros. 'Esla Caballero's sweet smile and face definitely fits the clinic's warm and inviting facade.' Asian Base Dental Group has opened its doors and made it a goal to bring healthy smiles to each and everyone who enters the clinic and continues to welcome everyone who would want to have a confident smile. They have two branches, one at 4th Floor KJMall, Greenhills Shopping Center and 2nd Floor Midtown Wing, Robinsons Place Manila.

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Special Report

Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council

HOUSING GAINS in 2011

Strategic reform in functions and policies

Policy reform and functional integration among shelter agencies, good governance and a stronger government and private partnership, and program preference towards the poor and vulnerable marked the housing sector accomplishments in 2011. Still, issues and problems need to be addressed. These include keeping up with the demand for affordable, decent housing and basic services for the urban poor, with the resulting estimated 3.6 million housing units still needed nationwide. At the same time, the updating of policies continued in order to adapt to current developments in the environment, and firming up and enhancement of relationships with housing stakeholders such as non-government organizations, formal lending companies, and private developers.

President Benigno Simeon Aquino III in a huddle with Vice President and HUDCC Chairman Jejomar C. Binay

As Chairman of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council, Vice President Jejomar C. Binay led the key shelter agencies in finding solutions to the sector's issues, and to zero in on the production of decent and affordable housing in sustainable communities.

In line with President Benigno Aquino III's call to correct the inefficiencies of government systems, give preferential attention to the needs of the underprivileged, and align the programs, projects, and activities of all government departments and agencies, the Vice President focused on:

- Transparency, accountability, and participatory governance
- Poverty reduction and empowerment of the poor and vulnerable
- Rapid, inclusive, and sustained economic growth, and
- Protection of the integrity of the environment and promotion of climate change adaptation and mitigation

REFORMS FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE AND TRANSPARENCY

The Vice President has always maintained that deficiencies hamper the success of good programs. Thus, his first directive was to ensure that good governance and transparency were evident in the transactions and dealings of the shelter agencies with their clients. Under his guidance, all the shelter agencies adopted institutional reforms to eliminate opportunities for graft and corruption and improve delivery of services.

In addition to the anti-corruption campaign for transparency and good governance, the Vice President directed all housing corporations to strictly abide by and enforce the Code of Good Corporate Governance to ensure that the performances of the agencies and the remuneration and allowances of personnel are properly audited. To this end, the shelter agencies assigned Compliance Officers and Board Committees to ascertain that all Board decisions are followed promptly and efficiently. This has resulted in the considered role of the Board of Directors in making agency performance and the remuneration and allowances of personnel. Risk analysis and customer review of requisitions and revenue patrols were also conducted, resulting in clearer targets and priorities.

I. Simplified Rules of Procedure and Fast-tracked Resolution of Cases

The Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board (HLURB) revised its Rules of Procedure and eliminated the tedious process by modifying one of the rules filed before the agency. The Board stopped its litany of reasons for deferring the Motion for Reconsideration from the Division/Regional Order of the Board. The revised rules resulted in a simplified process and shortened the period for finality of judgment from 30 days to 15 days.

The Board also issued the a zero backlog of appealed cases. As of date, 349 of the 417 cases have already been resolved and the remaining 68 cases have draft resolutions ready for deliberation.

II. Developed New Guidelines for Transparency

HLURB revised the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) governing Section 18 of RA 7279, or the Urban Development and Housing Act (UDHA) of 1992, effectively expanding the coverage and modernizing the production of socialized housing. The new IRR is to faithfully comply with the provisions of the law; property developers are required to dedicate at least 20 percent of a total subdivision area or at least 30% of the total project cost for socialized housing.

Under the new compliance, developers are no longer limited to construct their socialized housing projects within the same city or municipality as the main subdivision project. The developers are now allowed to build a socialized in the Philippines, pending approval by HLURB.

The previous practice of availing of the mere of participation of Five Thousand Pesos (P5,000.00) per housing unit of the 20% (that was pre-already) used to circumvent the requirements of the law) was also eliminated from the terms of options.

On the other hand, the Home Guaranty Corporation (HGC) developed financial standards and rating system for real estate developers that will be used to gauge their performance and guide HGC in deciding whether or not to provide guarantee. These include credit worthiness, risk profile, mortgages, and housing receivables. The rating system will also be used as a basis for pricing the guarantee.

New policies and guidelines to guarantee operations were also instituted to reduce guaranty calls and accumulation of acquired assets.

III. Pursued Cases Against Corrupt Practices

One of the first issues that the Vice President immediately addressed as HUDCC Chairman was the Globe Asiatique scandal that involved "non-issuance" worth P6 billion. After a careful and thorough inter-agency investigation, the loan takeover issued are to be disadvantageous to the interest of Pag-IBIG Fund and its members. The Globe Asiatique case was deemed a test case of the Vice President's resolve to uphold good governance and transparency among the workforce of the shelter agencies.

The issue of the Vice President's involvement and the resort-hearing evidences gathered during the investigation, the Globe Asiatique owner and his cohorts were charged with 21 counts of syndicated estafa before the Department of Justice (DOJ). Pag-IBIG Fund also charged some of its officials involved in the scandal with administrative cases.

KEY PARTNERSHIPS FOR SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT

To facilitate a speedy resolution in addressing the housing problems, the Vice President formed strong and cohesive partnerships among the HUDCC and the key shelter agencies, the Local Government Units (LGUs), Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), and the private sector. He also made sure that each housing program achieves the goal of sustainable communities and urban development.

I. Foundation of Strong and Effective Partnerships to Achieve the Housing Sector's Goals

One of the first actions of the Vice President was to facilitate a shelter-wide strategic planning with the agency heads and technical planning people. This was done to formulate the policy and program thrusts and priorities of the housing sector.

A. Convening the HUDCC

In order to encourage the active participation of housing stakeholders, HUDCC was convened again, and now holds regular quarterly meetings. This is to enhance enhanced coordination with all housing stakeholders, particularly the Congress and the private sector, and resulted in an efficient discussion of strategies and a unified position on housing policies and directions for the near-term years.

The HUDCC also agreed to push for the creation of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (DHUD). This serious growth via support of President Benigno Aquino III and the leadership of Congress. As a department, the DHUD is expected to streamline and promote efficient coordination and integration of housing and urban development plans, programs and projects.

B. Enhancing Partnerships with LGUs through the Pabahay Convoy Program

A former local executive himself, Binay believes that the LGUs are in the best position to determine the immediate needs of their constituents, even on housing. He trusts that housing production would be accelerated if the LGUs are placed in the forefront of the housing projects. This strategy would also reduce costs and make houses more affordable.

With this in mind, he launched the Pabahay Convoy to enhance partnership with the LGUs in the delivery of housing services and to reduce the 3.6 million housing need. The two-day convoy-in-search expos was designed to raise awareness on the programs and services of the housing agencies, help the LGUs perform their functions as mandated under Republic Act 7279, and increase the production base for housing.

Among the programs and services of the shelter agencies for local governments are as follows:

- Resettlement Program for LGUs (NHA)
- Localized Community Mortgage Program (Local Housing Finance Corporation)
- Group Housing Program (Pag-IBIG Fund)
- Housing Regulation and Land Use Planning (HLURB)
- Local Shelter Planning (HUDCC)

As a follow-up activity, the HUDCC spearheaded the creation of the Central Inter-Agency Coordinating Team (CIACT) and Pabahay Regional Inter-Agency Committee Team (PRIACT) composed of technical personnel of HUDCC and the attached RSAs. The CIACT and the PRIACT will assist the LGUs in the implementation of housing programs in their respective localities and build on the gains of the Pabahay Caravan.

C. Partnerships that Generated Alternative Funds for Housing Production

One of the successful partnerships that the Vice President made in 2011 is the credit facility agreement between Pag-IBIG Fund and the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS). This agreement allows the Pag-IBIG to refinance GSIS' loans for housing. The Fund will put up a special loan for GSIS members and pensioners to help them avail the housing loans. GSIS has already released an initial P1 billion to finance the housing loans of its members and pensioners through the Pag-IBIG.

On the other hand, the HGC intensified efforts to promote their guarantee program to encourage private banks and financing institutions into home lending. New guaranty entitlements for the year amounted to P38 billion translating to 27,000 housing units.

Meanwhile, the National Home Mortgage Finance Corporation's (NHMFC) pursued its Housing Loan Receivables Purchase Program (HLRPP) in line with its mandate to develop and provide for a secondary market for home mortgages granted by public and/or private home financing institutions. The purchase of mortgages and housing loan receivables assure engineering institutions of the immediate recovery of their liquidity as NHMFC consequently assumes the long-term role of home lending and offers another of home financing. Being first criteria of risk and renewal of liquidity, engineering institutions are enabled to lend to more home borrowers.

D. Sectoral Forums through Various Planning Programs and Projects of Key Partners

From July 2010 when the Vice President assumed chairmanship of HUDCC up to December 2011, the housing sector was able to provide security of tenure to nearly 160,000 households, 83 percent or about 133,000 of which were to housing for the poor and the low income. The consolidated housing production of the shelter agencies has resulted to the generation of job opportunities to 1.1 million urban and rural workers. Of this accomplishments, almost 100,000 were delivered in 2011.

In 2011, the HDFC through its Community Mortgage Program, delivered housing assistance to about 16,000 beneficiary families valued at almost P6 billion. This is, by far, the highest performance of the program and is more than double the 7,105 accomplishment in 2010. The HDFC has adopted the strategy of expanding partnership with the LGUs by engaging them to implement Localized CMP projects. Most specifically, it has targeted 70 percent of its portfolio for cities outside the National Capital Region (NCR), with poverty or highly urbanized cities, cities with high population growth rates, and the metro cities.

The Pag-IBIG Fund extended P11.3 billion for the construction or acquisition of nearly 46,500 housing units by SDMP members who availed the Fund's end-user financing program. Additional 9,333 units have been approved with a value of P6.7 billion and are pending take out.

Since July 2010, Pag-IBIG provided a total of P11.81 billion to fund 81,713 housing units for its members. The NHA provided security of tenure to more than 43,600 families in 2011, bringing the total families covered since July 2010 to about 60,100, most of whom belong to the bottom 10 percent of the income population. The various housing programs of NHA were valued at more than P7 billion.

Please turn to next page

HOUSING GAINS ... from previous page

C. Collaboration with the private sector and NGOs

To create an investment-friendly environment in the housing industry, the HUDCC supported the continued inclusion of mass housing in the Investment Priorities Plan. Real estate associations were also encouraged to liquefy their housing loan receivables through the NHMFC Housing Loan Receivables Purchase Program. Furthermore, private developers are now engaged in policy and decision-making processes through their representation in the HUDCC Council.

The collaboration of private developer and real estate groups with HUDCC resulted in the increase by the Bureau of Internal Revenue of the ceiling of house and lot acquisitions exempted from the value-added tax from P2.5 million to P3.19 million. With the increase in the cap, we expect to generate more housing acquisitions as houses would be made more affordable without the payment of the VAT.

Consistent with DBM National Budget Memorandum No. 100 (which advocates partnership with NGOs in the preparation of budget proposals for 2012), the housing agencies that deal with informal settlers, such as the NHA and SHFC, included the basic sectors in the 2012 budget preparation.

The 41,000 granted gave the IRR for RA 9904, or the Magna Carta for Homeowners and Homeowners' Association. The IRR specifically defines the rights and powers of the associations and the duties and responsibilities of its officers. These newly implemented rules would benefit housing unit owners as they expanded the definition and concept of the homeowner.

Because of their proven track record in building affordable housing and better communities, non-government organizations such as the United Ralfego (UR) and the Habitat for Humanity (HFH) were engaged in building socialized housing projects, especially for families affected by calamities. Having been elected as a member of the Board of Directors of the SHFC, the HFH was involved in policy-making for informal settler families.

The HUDCC recognized the contribution of NGOs in housing production by including the construction of socialized housing projects by accredited NGOs as a mode of compliance for balanced housing requirements, in lieu of exempting them from the requirements of Licensed to Sell.

II. Decent and Affordable Housing in Sustainable Communities

For the informal settler families living in "danger zones" or those living near estuaries and waterways, under bridges, by the rivers, on stilts over the bay, and are under immediate danger of being swept away or drowning during heavy rainfall, President Benigno Aquino III released an initial P3B billion allocation for a housing program. This shall include in-city housing, such as multi-storey buildings, and off-city relocation. The first-year target is to provide housing in safer communities to about 105,000 IDFs in danger areas in Metro Manila.

Until recently, urban development has not been given any consideration in redeveloping congested cities and designing new communities. There is also a need for climate change-resistant housing and sustainable communities in effects of climate change have caused widespread devastation of lives and properties in the country.

With these challenges in mind, the Vice President led the initiative in creating sustainable communities and promoting urban development nationwide through a progressive and comprehensive resettlement and urban upgrading strategy as well as programs that provide for sustainability.

Groundbreaking of housing project in Kadahuyan Village, Sta. Barbara, Iloilo.

A. Formulation of a National Slum Upgrading Strategy (NSUS) towards a Comprehensive Shelter Plan for Informal Settler Families

To guide the national government and local government units in the preparation and implementation of effective policies and programs on slum upgrading, the HUDCC has forged partnership with the Cities Alliance on 10 May 2011. The Cities Alliance, an organization which promotes a global partnership for urban poverty reduction and the promotion of the role of cities in sustainable development, approved the proposal of HUDCC to develop a National Slum Upgrading Strategy (NSUS) for the Philippines.

The NSUS will feature a number of preparatory activities leading to the development and adoption of the slum-upgrading strategy. The components of the strategy include:

- A workshop to take stock of current initiatives in slum upgrading in local and international settings;
- An inventory and assessment of policies, programs, processes and institutions undertaken by the government, NGOs and the private sector on slum upgrading in the Philippines;
- An inventory and assessment of slum tenure;
- Development of the strategy that will be subjected to stakeholder consultations; and
- The development of a communications scheme to promote and support the adoption of the strategy.

The NSUS shall be complemented by a comprehensive review of the resettlement policies and the preparation of a comprehensive shelter plan for informal settler families in Metro Manila. This shelter plan will ensure the provision of basic social services (e.g., schools, public markets, health care centers) and livelihood opportunities at the resettlement sites.

The HUDCC aims to adopt an enhanced Resettlement Policy Framework that identifies common procedures and guidelines among all infrastructure agencies, the housing agencies, the local government units (LGU), and other government agencies. The framework will include an exit mechanism or strategy by the NHA. It sets performing privand post-resettlement activities. The agency will then turn over obligations, particularly in estate management and community development, to LGUs and NGOs engaged in advocacy work and helping the urban poor.

This shall be translated into a sustainable government resettlement program that will address the housing problem of families residing in danger areas and areas affected by government infrastructure projects.

B. Integration of Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction Measures in Shelter and Urban Development Plans and Programs

Through the HLURB, local governments are assisted in the integration of climate change mitigation and adaptation actions, as well as disaster risk management measures in their development planning.

To maximize efforts and reach more LGUs, HLURB is now implementing the Cluster Approach to comprehensive land use planning (CLUP). As a result, it has exceeded its 2011 annual target to providing assistance to the LGUs to CLUP preparation by 76 percent (109/143) as of December 2011. This agency's accomplishment is the number of awarded LGUs, whose CLUPs are ready for approval, but also exceeded targets by 100 percent (38/0/25) covering the same period.

Batangas City serves as the pilot area for climate-proofing CLUPs and Local Shelter Plans. Disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation were mainstreamed in its local development planning and decision making processes. The LGU took on the challenge to design, build, and showcase resilient energy-efficient human settlement in a coastal city. This initiative involved the localization of the housing policies and guidelines on site planning and house construction with specific attention to local climate change scenarios, urban development and housing trends, and the poor's capacity to cope with disasters and extreme events. The development was conducted with UN Habitat under the Millennium Development Goals- F 1656 Joint Programme.

C. Promotion of Green Technologies

The Vice President sees the imminent need to integrate, develop, and promote indigenous and green building technology in construction. This is being done through the accreditation of indigenous technologies for housing (ACTECH). The pilot on prototype projects to showcase to LGUs and private partners on the use of green technology and its affordability is already underway.

Likewise, among the HUDCC's initiatives is the promotion and use of green technology that incorporates climate risk reduction into the policies of the LGUs, and encourages families to participate in efforts to create climate-resilient cities and protect the environment. Throughout this process, the LGU must engage the poor in defining risks and appropriate actions while taking into account the special needs of women, children, and the elderly who are the most affected during calamities and emergencies.

PROVIDING ASSISTANCE THROUGH PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

The Vice President led the housing agencies in the implementation of housing projects catering to various sectors.

Aside from the formulation of policies and programs to address the housing sector's needs, Binay acknowledged that speedy action in assisting our fellow Filipinos is vital. In 2011, the housing czar entrusted the shelter agencies to assist and support Filipinos affected by the conflict in the Middle East and North Africa, the tsunami in Japan, as well as the local devastations brought about by typhoons Quiel, Pedring, and Sendong.

A. Implementation of Housing Programs Just Catered to the Needs of Other Sectors

The Aquino administration is keen on providing housing for government employees and other groups. With this, the President provided P12 billion to SSS for the Armed Forces of the Philippines/Philippine National Police Housing Program. Several sites were identified under the program including Bocaue, San Jose del Monte and Norzagaray in Bulacan, Baras and Rodriguez in Rizal, in Cabanatuan, Laguna, and Tarlac Marriott and Gen. Trias in Cavite. Around 15,538 housing units, out of the targeted 21,000, have already been built for the program.

On the other hand, Pag-IBIG Fund revived its "HDMF-GSIS program" to benefit public utility drivers and operators. Pag-IBIG and the Department of Education (DepEd) also signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for a Home Financing and Rent-to-Own Housing Loan programs for public school teachers. These programs provide low monthly amortization payments, making them affordable to the targeted beneficiaries.

The Fund also intensified its campaign on the registration of employers and employees in accordance with its charter, RA 9679. The compulsory membership to Pag-IBIG Fund would ensure that all employees, regardless of rank and category, would be able to avail the benefits and privileges extended by the Fund.

Also, for the first time, Indigenous Peoples (IPs) were included in the housing program of the government. The NHA has approved the housing project for 330 Aeta families in Pampanga which is scheduled for construction in 2012.

B. Providing Relief to Calamity Victims

The shelter agencies have always been ready to offer assistance to its clients affected by both man-made and natural calamities. Upon the instruction of the Vice President and shelter agencies' Boards of Directors/Trustees, the Pag-IBIG Fund approved earlier in the year a special assistance program for OFW Pag-IBIG members

Please turn to next page

Do dreams come true?

The Community Mortgage Program is a housing program being undertaken by the Social Housing Finance Corporation (SHFC). For over 20 years now, the CMP has been proven to be a viable and affordable home financing facility that enables a community association of informal settlers to acquire land where they will be relocated.

For the year 2011, a total of P982 Million in CMP loans has been granted, assisting 15,875 informal settler families in 171 urban poor communities all over the country, this brings to a cumulative total of P5.7 Billion total amount of housing loans lent to 237,327 beneficiaries since CMP began in 1989.

The Community Mortgage Program makes it possible.

CMP PERFORMANCE

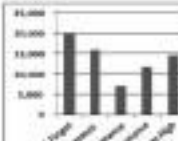
2011 Target: 19,000

2011 Performance: 15,875

2010 Performance: 7,339

Ave SHFC Performance: 11,735

1989 Program High: 16,581



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HOUSING GAINS... from previous page

affected by the conflict in the Middle East and North Africa as well as the victims of tsunami in Japan. The assistance from Pag-IBIG consisted of a 6-month moratorium on the affected OFWs' housing loans. They were also given the option to withdraw or claim their contributions to the Fund prior to maturity. No penalties for non-payment of amortization were imposed during the moratorium period. A similar form of assistance was also extended by other shelter agencies to clients residing in areas hit by typhoons Pedring, Quiel and Sendong.

In addition, Pag-IBIG Fund extended calamity loans worth P6.1 billion to about 332,800 Pag-IBIG members and facilitated the insurance claims of the affected members to help them recover.

C. Affordable Housing Beyond the Annual Housing Fair

The Housing Fair is an annual housing activity held every October in celebration of the National Shelter Month. This year's Housing Fair, the ninth on its run, was held from September 30 to October 2 with the theme "Unaang-araw Bukas sa Sariling Bahay." A joint project of the HUDCC, Key Shelter Agencies (KSAs) and Government Financial Institutions (GFIs) in partnership with the private sector, the fair served as a one-stop hub for people who are looking to buy houses.

For 2011, the KSAs and GFIs offered for sale more than 23,000 house and lot units at greatly reduced prices. As much as 80 percent discounts were given to those who bought properties during the three-day event. The acquired units for sale were vacant and ready for homeowners who want to move in immediately, unlike in previous housing fairs where buyers had to wait for former owners to vacate the units.

Meanwhile, those who preferred brand new housing units could choose from the new inventory offered by HUDCC's partners from the private sector including the Chamber of Real Estate and Builders Association (CREBA), National Real Estate Association, Inc. (NREA), Organization of Socialized Housing Developers of the Philippines, Subdivision and Housing Developers Association (SHDA).

The housing fair also highlighted the use of "green technology" in housing construction, which is being pushed by the Vice President. Through the cooperation of the Philippine Institute of Architects, the Statistical Condominium Design Competition was launched at the opening ceremony of the three-day fair to encourage architecture students to design a medium-rise building that utilizes environment-friendly materials.

For the three-day fair, the KSAs and GFIs disposed a total of 299 units valued at P96.847 million.

THE NEXT FOUR YEARS AND BEYOND

The Vice President, through the HUDCC, has set the direction towards making opportunities available through housing options that are decent, affordable, and responsive to the diverse and changing needs of families and underprivileged Filipino families. Guided by the principles of transparency and good governance, the HUDCC will continue to provide frameworks and enabling policies that will govern the concerned agencies and LGUs in the implementation of housing and urban development plans and activities. In terms of housing assistance, the HUDCC aims to provide homes to at least 1.3 million families by 2016.

To achieve this, HUDCC shall pursue the following thrusts:

1. Create alternative landbanking mechanisms to spur housing production.
2. Build a strong partnership with LGUs to accelerate housing production, reduce cost, and make homes more affordable.
3. Create an investment-friendly environment for the Housing Industry.
4. Institute a National Resettlement Policy Framework and National Slum Upgrading Strategy.

With these thrusts, HUDCC envisions that more housing programs with alternative housing technologies, schemes and approaches will be accelerated and programs on asset reform and sustainable communities will be strengthened. Further, the Council targets that housing for low income government and private sector employees will be provided.

Together with HUDCC and the key shelter agencies, the Vice President will push for the implementation of these steps for sustainable housing and urban development, and ultimately for the improvement of the lives of the Filipino people. *Kasambahay ang Pabahay sa pabahay at kaunlaran!*

Attention Employers!

Effective August 2011, only the electronic format of your Contribution Collection List (R3) is being accepted by SSS.

Two (2) ways to do it:

1. Submit digital file through USB flash drive or other electronic media
2. Submit electronically via online
   - Simply register thru My.SSS at the SSS website (http://www.sss.gov.ph)
   - Follow the system's instructions and provide the information needed in the Online Employer User ID Registration page.
   - Click the Submit button.

It's easy to do and will facilitate faster posting of contributions and processing of benefit and loan applications.

Once registered, you can submit your Contribution Collection List (R3) online and you can do other transactions thru the internet.

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HOME GUARANTY CORPORATION

Sovereign Guaranty

Since its creation in 1963 as the Home Financing Commission, the Home Guaranty Corporation (HGC) has institutionalized a viable system of credit guaranties that has become an integral component of the government's shelter program.

The HGC guaranty carries the unconditional guaranty of the Republic of the Philippines and fiscal incentives for housing credits extended by financing institutions. The HGC guaranty takes the risk out of private investment in housing—the more HGC guarantees, the more private funds flow for housing and urban development, the closer we get to a homeless-free Philippines.

Dependable Guaranty Institution

HGC had withstood the Asian Financial Crisis of the 1990s and the global economic crisis of the latter part of the previous decade that rocked the international mortgage market. HGC's guaranty had been called on several occasions and it had always honored its obligations—the true test of a dependable guaranty corporation.

"Fund Mobilizer" of Private Investments in Housing

HGC has two major guaranty programs, the retail and developmental guaranty. The retail guaranty covers the credit risk of individual housing loan borrowers, while the developmental guaranty covers the credit risk of loans for construction of housing projects.

Since 2000, with the enactment of its new charter, HGC has guaranteed PhP 257.25 Billion worth of private investment in housing – translating to 847,400 housing units. Pestering public-private partnerships at the forefront of the housing finance industry, HGC, since 2000, has partnered with 103 real estate developers and 125 banks and financial institutions.

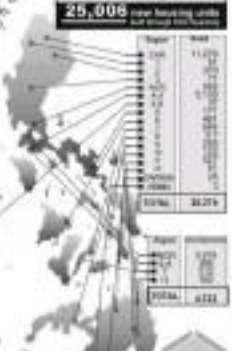
Under the enlightened leadership of the **Honorable Vice President and HUDCC Chairman Jejomar C. Binay**, HGC has approved P57.40 billion total guaranty lines and P10.8 billion developmental guaranty lines from January to December 2011. The functions include commercial banks, thrift banks, rural banks, building & loan associations, insurance companies and housing developers.

Actual housing loans that were released by funders and guaranteed by HGC for the year amount to PhP 37.38 billion, covering 25,006 housing loan accounts. Seventy-two percent (72%) of these accounts are socialized and low-cost housing packages. Medium-cost and high-end housing packages comprise the remaining 28%.

Premium income for 2011 reached P632.89 million, the highest premium collection recorded by HGC. As of the end of the year, the outstanding guaranty is PhP 78.54 billion covering 866,567 units.

CY 2011 Accomplishment

25,006 new housing units



Democratizing Access to Housing Finance

HGC continues to conceptualize new products to expand its guaranty business to benefit the poor and marginalized sector who are traditionally excluded from the credit system, to support the needs of emerging industries, and to bring the benefits of the sovereign guaranty to the countryside. Towards this end, HGC explores the development of the following guaranty products:

Street Guaranty for Individual Housing Loan - through HGC's intervention in loan application, housing loan borrowers can avail of the best financing terms, such as low interest rates, higher loanable values, and proper valuation of property.

Guaranty for Microfinance Housing – by guaranteeing the home financing program of microfinance institutions (MFIs), especially in the countryside, the low-income and underprivileged sectors including street vendors, small entrepreneurs, farmers, fisherfolks, urban poor and the informally-employed may avail of small loans for improving their homes and living conditions.

Guaranty for Employees Housing of Non-Financial Institutions (NFI) – Non-Financial Institutions, especially the Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) industry, are considered as economic drivers because of their significant contributions to the growth of the national economy. However, the housing needs of BPO employees and other NFI workers are underserved as they are considered high-risk borrowers.

Guaranty for Support Facilities for Housing - The guaranty will cover loans, bond flotation and issuance of securities and other credit facilities for the development or construction of necessary support facilities for residential communities such as market, recreation centers, livelihood projects, and other facilities that will provide social and economic services and employment opportunities to the residential community.

Pag-IBIG Fund now ISO 9001:2008 Certified

The Home Development Mutual Fund, also known as the Pag-IBIG Fund is now ISO 9001:2008 Certified. This was announced by Atty. Darlene Marie B. Berberabe, Pag-IBIG Chief Executive Officer, after TUV SUD PSB Philippines, Inc., a third party ISO certifying body, has declared the HDMF as ISO certified during the 31st anniversary celebration of the Fund.

"Pag-IBIG is the first among shelter agencies to get the coveted ISO certification and the fastest to complete the certification process among GOCCs, which took a record period of three months and 19 days from employee orientation," says Atty. Berberabe. "This means that the existing processes in membership registration are essentially proper and of private sector caliber."

Meanwhile, Vice President Jejomar C. Binay, who is also the chairman of the Pag-IBIG Board, congratulates the Pag-IBIG Fund for being ISO Certified.

"The public is assured that Pag-IBIG's membership registration process is at par with international standards. It is a business quality that is comparable with the best practices of other countries. It should instill trust and confidence on the quality of service and the management system of the Pag-IBIG Fund," says the Vice President.

The ISO Certification covers Pag-IBIG's Membership Registration Process which falls under the Advocacy and Capability Building Component of the Government Quality Management Program (GQMP). This component is expected to promote awareness, generate support, harness resources, and develop organizational capabilities in the establishment, implementation, and continuing improvement of quality management systems in public sector organizations.

The GQMP was issued by virtue of EO No. 605, to effect improvements in public sector performance recognizing the International Organization for Standardization 9000 series.

"We will subsequently apply for expansion of the ISO certification to our other premises. This is just the beginning and this is to show that we are serious in our quest for excellence and professionalism," Atty. Berberabe further announced.

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Jejomar Erwin S. Binay Jr.
Mayor